Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Did you vote in last week's election for a CNMI delegate to the U.S. Congress?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
www.saipantribune.com
to cast your vote.

46 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Inauguration
President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration is expected to draw 1 million-plus to D.C.

NATION...Page 10

Weak Peso
The peso slid Thursday to 49.495 against the dollar, its lowest close in two years.

MAHARLIKA...Page 12

Cancelled Gig
Rihanna has canceled a concert in Indonesia over security concerns.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

COMPARED TO JULY-SEPTEMBER 2007

Consumer prices rise in Q3

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The cost of basic consumer goods rose 6.4 index points in the third quarter of 2008 compared to the same period last year, further underlining the higher prices spent by CNMI residents for food, housing and utilities, medical care, education and communication, recreation, alcoholic beverages, and apparel.

According to latest data from the Department of Commerce, the consumer price index for the period of July to September 2008 climbed to 120.2 compared to the 113.8 recorded in the same period in 2007.

This means that a market basket of goods and services that

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KRISTI EATON

Construction workers level the ground at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort construction site.

Hofschneider

Longer leases on private lots fails to pass

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

A proposal to extend the permissible term for private land leases in the Commonwealth from 55 years to 75 years failed in the House of Representatives on Thursday.

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HOW THEY VOTED

Yes
Rep. Edwin Aldan
Rep. Oscar M. Babauta
Rep. Diego T. Benavente
Rep. Francisco Dela Cruz
Rep. Victor B. Hocog
Rep. Heinz Hofschneider
Rep. Raymond Palacios
Rep. Cristina M. Sablan
Rep. Edward Salas
Rep. Stanley T. Torres

No
Speaker Arnold I. Palacios
Vice Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero
Floor Leader Joseph James Camacho
Rep. David Apatang
Rep. Joseph Reyes
Rep. Rosemond Santos
Rep. Ramon Tebuteb
Rep. Ralph Anthony Torres
Rep. Ray N. Yumul

Absent
Rep. Justo Quitugua

House says no to more tax breaks for LaoLao

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives has opposed granting additional tax breaks for the investor behind the multimillion-dollar construction project at the LaoLao Bay Golf Resort.

The lawmakers, by a 10-7 vote on Thursday, adopted a resolution asking the Commonwealth Development Authority to deny a request for more benefits under the qualifying certificate program for Saipan LauLau Development, a subsidiary of the South Korean conglomerate Kumho Asiana.

Earlier this year, CDA and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial approved a plan to provide up to $18 million in tax relief for

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'Repeal developer's tax to boost investments' **PAGE 3**
Matson fuel surcharge drops for 5th month. **PAGE 5**

Local

CRM staff cleans up after homeless person

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

CRM director John Joyner, with helmet, joins his staffs in cleaning up a pile of trash on a private lot across Winchell's in Garapan.

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The director of Coastal Resource Management and his staff were seen yesterday in Garapan, cleaning up a private lot that is being used by a homeless person to store foodstuffs he gets from trash cans near the area.

CRM director John R. Joyner said they have done this five times already.

"This is an intriguing occasion because this site is occupied by a homeless person. He sleeps here at night and we have chased him several times but he is so fast," Joyner said.

At one point, CRM staffs were able to talk to the guy and learned that he is a Palauan. He even gave his name as Peter.

Peter, they learned, has a family here on Saipan but he prefers to make his own living by scavenging from the trash bins.

The site, littered with non-biodegradable trash such as plastic bags and soda cans, is located just across Winchell's.

Joyner said he has already seen the guy but this person was quick to run away and refused to talk to him.

"There are a lot of questions about this. Much of the stuff are from supermarkets and other stores in the area," said Joyner.

However, Joyner said, it is unfair to blame these stores because they have done everything they could to secure their trash boxes by putting locks on it.

"Still there is no effect. He just keeps doing it," Joyner said, adding that another private lot owned by Saipan World Resort in Susupe is also being used by the same person.

Similar security efforts have been done by World Resort but the man keeps scrounging through their trash.

Government agencies, including the Department of Public Safety, Division of Environmental Quality and the Department of Public Health, are already aware of this and are trying to remedy this problem.

When asked if the man may be psychologically impaired, Joyner said he doesn't think so. "Maybe it's just his lifestyle. Maybe it's laziness."

He said this should not be tolerated because "it is everyone's responsibility to make sure the environment is safe and clean."

"We have to find out how to address this problem. Did he commit a crime? Definitely yes, and it is about littering. He must be fined $500," said Joyner.

But, he added, the problem is where this man would get the money to pay the fine if he only wants a lifestyle like this. Besides, being lazy is not a crime.

"But we cannot allow an eyesore that impinges on our tourists when they pass by the area," said Joyner.

Search continues for missing Guam fisherman

HAGATNA, Guam—The search continues for a spear fisherman who went missing Wednesday.

U.S. Coast Guard was notified at midnight Wednesday of a missing fisherman near a reef off Inajaran, Guam. Friends reported the fisherman's last known position to the Coast Guard's 24-hour command center in Apra Harbor.

The 36-year-old male was last seen at 5pm Nov. 12, and was reportedly diving 40 to 50 feet down, with fins, snorkel, spear gun and weights. However, local authorities were not notified until six hours later.

Guam Fire and Rescue personnel launched a shore side search and the Coast Guard launched a crew aboard a 25-foot small boat to search an area from the tip of Cocos Island to Achang Reef.

In addition, crews aboard a Navy HH-60 helicopter from HSC-25, the Coast Guard 110-foot patrol boat *Washington*, and a Guam Fire and Rescue jet ski joined the search at first light Thursday and have been continuously searching since.

Search plans are to have crews scouring the reef and open ocean through the night. The Coast Guard reminds mariners of the importance of early notification on missing persons cases. ***(USCG)***

'Termination of security guard found sleeping is unreasonable'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Labor Secretary Gil M. San Nicolas has found unreasonable the termination of a security guard who fell asleep while waiting for his shift to start.

San Nicolas said he disagrees that reasonable grounds existed to support GTS Security Inc.'s termination of Danilo Y. Cruz.

"There was no evidence introduced by [GTS] in support of the supervisor's assumption of intoxication, save the fact that [Cruz] was sleeping," he pointed out.

San Nicolas reversed the decision of Labor administrative hearing officer Herbert D. Soll, who had determined that Cruz shall take nothing from GTS in his claim for wages.

The Secretary remanded the case back to Soll for further hearing and instructed the hearing officer to take evidence on wages due and award Cruz the sum.

In his administrative order issued November 2007, Soll said that Cruz had difficulty getting to work on Dec. 28, 2005. Cruz's car was not operating and he called his employer, GTS Security, for a ride. He arrived at work earlier than scheduled and sat down near the entrance to the Hafa Adai Hotel employees' living quarters, his assigned work location.

Cruz removed his shoes and was soon asleep. The GTS supervisory employee discovered him in that state.

The supervisor assumed that the guard was under the influence of alcohol and photographed him.

The supervisor then called for a replacement to take over the shift. When Cruz finally woke up, it was after 11pm.

Cruz tried to speak with the managing officer of the employing corporation. He was, however, not given an opportunity to do so.

A letter of discharge was written on Dec. 29, 2005, and served upon Cruz.

Cruz adamantly denied being intoxicated. He claimed to have been tired after a prolonged effort to repair his vehicle that day.

Cruz said he arrived early at work and decided to rest in a discreet place. His tiredness caused him to sleep beyond the time when he was to take over his shift.

The supervisor, according to Cruz, assumed that he was intoxicated and photographed him while he was asleep (but not on duty).

A replacement was called while no attempt to wake up Cruz occurred. The next day, without allowing the complainant to state his position, Cruz's employment was terminated.

In his order, Soll found Cruz less at fault than GTS was by refusing to allow him to defend himself before being terminated.

Soll said the evidence at the hearing, however, established that reasonable grounds existed to support the termination action.

The hearing officer cited a section of the contract that provided for the employer to discuss the alleged violation with the employee.

Soll said Cruz did not do so, although he requested to speak with the person in charge.

"This eliminated any chance of finding that the supervisor may have been mistaken in his assumption that the complainant was in violation of company policy," Soll said.

Soll did not award Cruz with his claim for wages, but allowed him to transfer to a new employer.

Cruz, through attorney Stephen C. Woodruff, appealed Soll's decision to the Labor Secretary.

Woodruff asserted that Soll's order erred as a matter of law in failing to award contract damages when the facts as found by the hearing officer and stated in the order clearly established that the termination was wrongful.

San Nicolas agreed with Woodruff. He said Cruz tried to speak to the manager of the company but, contrary to the provision of the contract that required that he be given an opportunity to do so, he was not allowed to explain the circumstances and he was terminated.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IN APPRECIATION
The Marianas Visitors Authority presents KNT with a plaque of appreciation and a resolution from the CNMI Legislature for the Rota Charter Project. Also shown is the Special Judges Award received by KNT for their untiring effort and perseverance to make the Rota destination a successful one. Shown receiving the recognition are Yoshinori Ochi, center, senior managing director of KNT, and Nanako Shibuya, left, MVA Japan representative. At right is PDI president and MVA board member Yoichi Matsumura.

Math placement test set

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting the Math Placement Tests on the following dates:

Jan. 6	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Room: D-1
	5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Room: D-1
Jan. 8	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Room: D-1
	5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 13	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 15	5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Room: A-9

No reservations needed, first-come, first-served. No admittance to the testing room will be allowed after the starting times listed above.

Those who wish to take the test must bring a valid ID (Drivers License, passport or School ID), pens or pencils and a calculator (optional).

There is a $25 fee for the Math Placement Test that must be paid in advance at the NMC Cashier Window at the Finance Office (M-F, 8:30am – 4:00pm), which is located in Building N. Applicants will not be admitted to the testing room without proof of payment (a receipt for the placement test fee). NMC students are not allowed to take the placement test more than once. The only exception to this condition is for NMC students who have NOT taken a math class within one year of taking the math placement test.

If you have any questions call the Sciences, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Department at (670) 234-5498 Ext. 1200 or 1212. ***(NMC)***

'Repeal developer's tax to boost investments'

A local architect is backing a tax abatement proposal that has been introduced in the Legislature, saying it will encourage development in the commonwealth.

Herman B. Cabrera, who runs his own architectural firm, called the 2-percent developer's tax is "a product of greed." He said that many developers are turned off by it.

"When the developers see these prices together with the building permit fees, they turn down their projects in the CNMI. They point out that if the 2 percent developer's tax is eliminated, they will still be giving multiple contributions to the CNMI from the start of design, construction, to the operation of the business," Cabrera wrote in a letter to the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism.

One example of such an investor, he said, is the company behind a proposal to build a cable car up Mt. Tapochao. Cabrera disclosed that he is working on the project called "Top of the World Cable Car." But the investor, which he did not name, is unsure whether to pursue the project because of the 2-percent developer's tax charged by the CNMI government.

"Saipan will lose this project, which will greatly contribute multiple benefits to the CNMI. The cable car project is the type of establishment that will promote tourism to our island," he said.

Cabrera's statement follows the recent introduction of a House bill to establish an "economic stimulus investment program" in the Northern Marianas. Similar to the existing qualifying certificate program, the incentive plan offers tax abatement for new investments. The proposed legislation will require the Department of Commerce to grant tax relief for new investments of at least $5 million for a one-time period of three years.

Sponsored by Rep. Joseph Reyes, the proposal has received largely favorable response from the business sector. The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Rota Resort & Country Club, and Bridge Investment Group, which is proposing a multimillion dollar casino resort on Tinian, are among those that have submitted letters of support for the bill. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Hopwood teacher shares passion for marching

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Louie Wabol loves marching so much he's given up his retirement for it.

Wabol, a physical education teacher at Hopwood Jr. High School, has consistently returned to the school as a volunteer or substitute teacher to teach students proper marching, despite retiring as a full-time teacher in 2005.

Yesterday was his last day as a substitute teacher for the year at HJHS. As a sub, he can only teach for 60 days a year, a milestone he has already reached this school year because he worked on holidays and weekends. But that doesn't mean he won't be right back at the school next week as a volunteer.

"My profession, it's part of me," he said.

Wabol first discovered marching as a platoon leader.

"I learned it was an art," he said.

He has since taught that art to students over the years.

KRISTI EATON

Hopwood PE teacher Louie Wabol stands in front of a chalkboard covered with marching commands.

"I thought it was important because it's a prerequisite for ROTC, so when they exit [junior high] they use it a lot," he said, adding that former students returning from service come up to him and tell him how much they appreciate the skills he taught them.

Marching is like dancing, said Wabol, who has created his own marching commands.

"I've thrown tap dancing in there," he said. "It's beautiful."

He said students are more inclined to exercise when they are having fun.

"It motivates them. When you sing and march they feel special. They're excited," he added.

Since 1989, Wabol has selected students to take part in a drill team. They perform at Islandwide parades, like the July 4th Liberation Day parade, he said.

Wabol is training advanced students how to give commands, but that doesn't mean he's leaving.

"Whether I retire or it's a part time job, I always return," he said.

"I just don't want to see it die," he added.

Frank Angel, a fellow PE teacher at Hopwood, said Wabol is a dedicated and motivated teacher.

"He loves his job. He inspires a lot of students to work at their best," Angel said.

25 patients avail of free foot clinic

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Some 25 patients availed of the free foot clinic at the Physical Therapy Department of the Commonwealth Health Center yesterday as part of the observance of 2008 World Diabetes Day.

Physical therapist Dana McFadden said that of this number, there were 18 who were found with high sugar levels, evidence of the high rate of diabetes in the CNMI.

CONTACT INFO
PT Department: 236-8327/8

Only four of the patients knew they have diabetes while others had no previous check-ups.

McFadden said two of the patients were referred to a physician, which means that these patients may have possibly higher sugar in their blood.

PT Department manager Pam Carhill earlier estimated that one third of the population in the CNMI are diabetics.

Some of the services the patients availed of yesterday included blood sugar check, blood pressure check, foot inspection, instruction in diabetic foot care, education in blood sugar control, education in nutrition, and vision check.

Patient educator Bobby Ann Ayres said a lot of people don't know their blood sugar levels. It may be high, she said, and they need be educated about how to undergo therapy. As for those who don't have diabetes, she said they also need to learn how to prevent it.

About 3.8 million people die of diabetes every year. This means every 10 seconds a person dies from diabetes-related illnesses among the more than 240 million people worldwide who has this disease.

For more information on how to manage diabetes or prevent its onset, contact 236-8327/8.

FOOT CARE ESSENTIALS

Diabetics are vulnerable to foot amputations due to poor foot care. There are many ways of taking care of one's feet if one is diabetic, one of which is to control blood sugar levels in the blood. Follow these steps to avoid serious foot problems:

- You should wash your feet everyday with warm water and soap;
- Dry your feet well, especially between your toes;
- Keep your skin soft and smooth. Rub a thin coat of lotion on the tops and bottoms of your feet, but not between your toes;
- Use toenail clippers to trim your toenail. Cut toenails straight across and never cut into the corners
- Use a nail file or emery board to smooth the edges of your toenails;
- Never walk barefoot indoors or outdoors;
- Watch your step! Walk in well-lit areas and use pathways that are free of nails, trash, sharp rocks, shells and branches;
- Check your feet every day. Use a mirror to see the bottoms of your feet. Tell your doctor right away if you find red spots, cuts, swelling or blisters.
- See your doctor or health cape provider for a complete foot exam at least once every year—more often if you have foot problems.

Source: *Department of Public Health*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to 4 CMC, Div. 7, Section 7306 (i) of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, OIC Marianas Insurance Corporation is making its intention known of increasing the company's paid-up capital and surplus in accordance with this statute.

HENRY TORRES
General Manager
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1st Flr. Chong's Bldg.
Pale Arnold Rd., Gualo Rai
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PEPSI

New Caledonia screens visitors for dengue

SUVA, Fiji (Oceania Flash/PIR)—Inbound international passengers coming from such neighboring countries as Fiji are now been screened for possible dengue fever symptoms upon arrival at New Caledonia's La Tontouta airport

The key tool used by local health services is a state of the art heat-sensitive camera filming all passengers, with a special focus on flights coming from neighboring countries currently affected by type 4 dengue fever epidemics, especially Fiji, where over 2,100 cases have so far been reported.

New Caledonia is currently facing a dengue type 1 epidemic, with over 1,000 cases reported.

The heat-sensitive camera, based on infrared technology, is monitoring all passengers in order to determine unusually high body temperature.

When the remotely detected temperature exceeds 37.5 degrees Celsius, the arriving passenger, regardless on whether he is a local resident of a visiting foreigner, is then approached by health agents.

He is then asked to fill in a form that will provide for a free dengue blood test at the local Pasteur medical institute.

Another copy of the same form is also simultaneously transmitted to the suspected passenger's place of residence, where local authorities are then asked to activate a targeted insecticide spraying campaign.

The targeted spraying is also known as "perifocal" tactics.

New Caledonia has stepped up its surveillance and awareness system, because an outbreak of the type 4 dengue fever, combined with the current type 1 already prevalent in the French Pacific territory, would have a disastrous impact.

While the serotype 1 dengue has been present in New Caledonia for the past few years, the type 4 has not been seen for many years.

This makes persons exposed more vulnerable.

New Caledonia has also stepped up its awareness campaign, in order to reinforce its message to the population.

While earlier media and television spots were stressing the need to clean up all potential mosquito breeding sites (still waters contained in old pots, tyres, gutters, bushy areas in compounds), to use mosquito nets, personal repellents and wear long sleeves, the new message is banking on the fear factor.

Since last week, viewers can see a person die of dengue fever in hospital, surrounded by powerless doctors.

The final message is: "Dengue too can kill you".

In French Polynesia, health authorities have also been placed on high alert, for the same reasons.

Aerial survey on Farallon

The Emergency Management Office, in conjunction with U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Guam, said the U.S. military would be conducting an aerial survey on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla on Monday, Nov. 17, from 7am to 12pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla Training Area (R7201) on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to this activity, EMO is reminding the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to take precautionary measure around this area during the time and date indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. ***(EMO)***

Noumea riot over shortage of cigarettes

SUVA, Fiji (Oceania Flash/PIR)—Police in New Caledonia on Wednesday used tear gas to prevent a mob of frustrated, tobacco-deprived individuals who tried to forcibly enter a warehouse that contained tons of cigarettes.

About 300 members of a consumers association were protesting against a shortage of tobacco products in local retail stores, which has been affecting them since earlier this month. The shortage is caused by a strike currently underway at the local public service's fiscal department. The fiscal services also include the tobacco monopoly.

As pressure mounted and that it became virtually impossible to buy a packet of cigarettes, local tobacco consumers have become increasingly irritable.

"It's very hard to deal with them, now. I have tried to put a sign on my door, which says we have no more cigarettes. But you're not dealing with customers, here; you're dealing with drugged people looking for their fix. They don't want to hear, they don't want to see, they just come in and they want cigarettes, retailer Corinne Piolet told local television RFO.

Since last week, some of the three main tobacco importers have released very little stock, which forced retailers to organize distributions with queuing tobacco-deprived customers very often frustrated only to be allowed one packet per person. Meanwhile, the strike goes on.

But on Wednesday, in order to prevent what could possibly turn into violence, New Caledonia's President Harold Martin authorized the direct importation of tobacco products until further notice.

The incident on Wednesday was triggered by a special delivery of tobacco to inmates at the local jail, the East Camp.

"(The prisoners) have everything and we have nothing," some protesters were shouting.

The group tried and somehow managed to force the gates of the main warehouse containing the precious substance. But they were immediately met by a squad of riot police, firing teargas. The crowd dispersed immediately.

"We wanted to smoke, but not like this," a smoked out protester said.

CONSUMER

From Page 1

cost $100 during the 2003 base period cost $120.2 in the third quarter of 2008. Most of the increases are on items tied to the spike in fuel prices the last few months, such as shipping, utilities, and retail.

In a quarter-to-quarter comparison, however, only the prices of food, education and communication, and other goods and services showed increases, with most categories posting declines across the board.

The rise in the consumer price index was led by a 14.7 index points increase in housing and utilities from 144.6 in the third quarter 2007 to 159.3 in the third quarter of 2008. This is attributed to the increase in the sharp spike in utilities and housing rentals.

Alcoholic beverages saw a slim decrease of 0.4 to103.5 in July-September of this year from 103.9 during the same period in 2007. According to the Commerce Department, the decrease is due to inventories concluding.

Due to an increase in shipping costs, goods for suppliers, utility rates and fuel, food saw a 9.6 index point increase from 106.5 in the third quarter of 2007 to 116.1 in the third quarter of 2008.

Apparel and recreation saw decreases of 1.5 and 2.7, respectively, from 102.3 and 100.8, respectively, in third quarter 2007 to 100.8 and 98.1,respectively, this quarter. The decrease for apparel is attributed to aggressive sales by vendors, while recreation went down because of aggressive sales on electronic inventories, according to the Department of Commerce. Aggressive sales means markdowns and price cuts on retail prices.

Because of premium changes in life insurance plans, medical care took a hit in the consumer price index line. It increased by 3.4 in the third quarter of 2008 to 104.5 from 101.1 in the same three months of 2007.

Education and communication, meanwhile, posted a slight increase of 0.2 from 100.6 to 100.8 bridging the third quarter of 2007 and the third quarter of 2008. This is attributed to a moderate increase in the prices of textbooks.

Transportation saw a 3.5 decrease from 100 in third quarter 2007 to 96.5 during the same period this year because of premium changes in auto insurance.

For the first time in several quarters, other goods and services did not remain at the base. It increased 7.7 from 100 during July-September 2007 to 107.7 during 2008's third quarter. According to the Commerce Department, this is due to increased service charges for remittances.

A total of 762 items are divided into the nine major categories. Nearly 1,000 price quotations are collected during the middle month of each quarter to compute the CPI. Approximately 123 businesses and government outlets are included in the collection of price quotations.

HOUSE

From Page 1

the $68.8 million golf hotel, or "golftel," a complex with condominium-style apartments for golf tourists. The tax relief ceiling is significantly less than the $27.7 million the resort had requested. Saipan LauLau Development and the governor are now asking CDA to amend the qualifying certificate to increase the incentive cap. In response, CDA has taken steps to amend its regulations and allow for reconsideration of an approved qualifying certificate.

Fitial, who supports giving Kumho Asiana additional tax breaks, has called the resolution "an attempt to sabotage the CNMI's economic recovery efforts during a time of global financial crisis."

In a memorandum to the House members, the author of the resolution said the Legislature, in recognition of the Kumho Asiana's contributions, has been accommodating to the investor. Rep. Ray N. Yumul noted that the Legislature granted the investor a new 40-year lease agreement for 161 hectares of land at a rental rate of $103,000 a year, a substantial decrease from the original rental amount of $384,000. He adds that the investor has been given relief from all applicable taxes, except for alcoholic beverage tax.

Yumul added that the resolution intends to promote economic recovery by urging CDA "to maintain the cap on the already very generous tax benefit package of Kumho's qualifying certificate."

"There must be a balance between the CNMI's economic recovery and protecting the interests of the people," he said.

On Wednesday, officials of LaoLao Bay Golf Resort disclosed that the construction project has been scaled down. The total investment to the resort has been reduced from $68 million to $60 million. The completion of the project, originally set for July 1, 2009, is now expected in the end of 2009.

LONGER

From Page 1

The proposed amendment to Article XII of the Constitution got a 10-9 vote, falling short of the three-fourths majority needed to get the legislative initiative on the ballot next year.

The initiative, sponsored by Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, proposed to extend the permissible leasehold term for private lands from 55 years to 75 years. It also sought to allow existing leasehold agreements to be renegotiated for a new lease term of up 75 years.

Rep. Edward Salas, one of the lawmakers in favor of the initiative, said he was disappointed with the outcome of the vote. He said that lawmakers should at least allow the voters to have their say on the proposal.

"This initiative is very business friendly," Salas said. "Longer lease terms are more attractive for investors because they allow them more time to recoup the investments. And if we have more people interested in our land, we get some competition going. That increases the value of the land."

Rep. Diego T. Benavente echoed Salas' statements, saying the initiative would benefit the economy, as well as individual landowners. "Because of the unwillingness of foreign businessmen to invest in a 55-year lease, local people are having to give away their land at less than premium price. The protection against land alienation that we're so concerned about actually is not holding up. People are still selling their property, and they are being taken advantage of," Benavente said.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb, one of the lawmakers who voted against the House initiative, said he was not convinced with the proponents' main argument that longer lease terms would help boost the economy. "The supporters of this initiative argue that the economy is suffering because of Article 12. But is it really? When the economy was good, Article 12 was in place, too," said Tebuteb.

He added that he opposes putting the legislative initiative on the ballot because the requirement for ratification is too low. "I'm all for letting the voters decide, but not like this. This issue is too important to be decided by a simple majority," Tebuteb said, adding that he prefers passing the amendment through the popular initiative process, which requires a two-thirds vote by the electorate.

Rep. Joseph James Camacho gave an entirely different reason for opposing the bill. Camacho, who has run surveys on land issues in his website, said there are more ways to amend the Commonwealth's land alienation act than extending the lease terms.

"If we pass this initiative, we're basically ruling out numerous other options for dealing with Article 12," Camacho said. These options, he said, include abolishing land ownership restrictions, allowing private landowners to sell their land to anyone, allowing long-term residents to own land, allowing any person born in the commonwealth to own land, and designate a zone where anyone can own land.

"I say, let's give the people a menu and let them pick what they want to do with Article 12, instead of asking them to vote yes or no on one particular option," said Camacho.

The Senate has passed a similar initiative, which proposes to extend the leasehold term for 80 years. The Senate version, still pending in the House, would also ease the requirements for corporations wishing to buy land in the Commonwealth. Under the initiative, a corporation would be able to own land with only 51 percent of its directors made up of people of Northern Marianas descent, and 51 percent of its stock owned by NMDs.

The Constitution restricts land ownership to persons of Northern Marianas descent. And in order for a corporation to own land, 100 percent of its directors must be NMDs and 100 percent of its voting shares be owned by people of Northern Marianas descent.

Matson fuel surcharge drops for 5th month

Customers can see $120-$200 savings per container

HONOLULU (AP)—Matson Navigation Co. on Wednesday announced it will drop its fuel surcharge rate for a fifth straight month because of a decline in its fuel cost.

Matson is lowering its rate by 5.5 percentage points for its Hawaii service from 25.5 percent to 19.5 percent. The new rate begins on Nov. 16.

The shipping company is also dropping its Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Micronesia service by 5.5 percentage points from 26.5 percent to 21 percent.

Matson has dropped its fuel surcharge by 22.75 percent since Sept. 20.

"Following an extended period in which oil costs hit historical record highs, it is encouraging to see this downward trend continue to be reflected in the prices the company is now paying for bunker fuel," Matson Navigation Co. Ocean Services Vice President Dave Hoppes said in a written statement. "For most customers, this represents a decrease in shipping costs ranging from $120 to $200 per container."

Matson dropped the fuel surcharge 2 percent last month.

SIX PUPPIES UP FOR ADOPTION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PAWS has six beautiful puppies that are currently up for adoption to a good home. The pups were found abandoned on Thursday and are thought to be about 6-7 weeks of age. All the puppies have been dewormed, treated for fleas and ticks, and bathed. If you are interested in adopting one of these pups, contact PAWS at 285-PAWS.

IN LAWSUIT OVER TINIAN SCHOOL PROJECT

Judge denies contractor request to be paid attorneys' fees, costs

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has denied the request for attorneys' fees and costs filed by Guerrero Brothers Inc., the contractor in the contentious Tinian High School construction project.

In an order issued Wednesday, Wiseman ruled that GBI cannot establish itself as the prevailing party in the lawsuit.

"Simply having established that the Public School System was liable for breaching the agreement is not sufficient," the judge said.

Wiseman recently ruled in another legal issue that the Commonwealth Development Authority is not entitled to $804,049 in damages in connection with the lawsuit.

In light of that recent order, the judge said, GBI's argument that CDA's monetary jury award equates to GBI being the prevailing party "is no longer valid."

"Additionally, although not consequential, GBI did not have to plead attorney's fees as an element of damages and their total request for fees was unreasonable," he said.

Wiseman said GBI had no pending claims against PSS and GBI was no longer a party to the suit.

According to court records, in 2001, Century Insurance Co. Ltd. sued PSS for alleged breach of contract involving the Tinian High School construction project. The insurance company also named as co-defendant GBI, which was awarded $3.8 million for the project. CIC alleged that PSS refused to pay the company that had assumed the completion of the school project.

PSS then filed a counter-claim against CIC, CDA, and GBI.

During the first phase of the jury trial in August 2008, GBI was found liable to pay CIC $170,960 in damages.

In the second phase of the jury trial, GBI and CDA claimed they suffered damage as a result of the breach of the 2001 settlement agreement between PSS and CIC.

The jury concluded that CIC did not breach its contract to provide interim payments to GBI and did not delay providing performance and payment bonds to GBI. The jury also found that CDA was entitled to $804,049 in damages from PSS as a result of PSS' breach of the GBI-PSS agreement.

PSS renewed its motion for judgment as a matter of law to overturn the jury's decision to award CDA damages. Wiseman granted PSS' motion.

In the second phase of the trial, GBI sought partial summary judgment on the issue of whether PSS breached its contractual duty to interplead remaining Phase 1 Funds in the amount of $804,049.73.

In the second phase of the trial the remaining parties were PSS and CDA. GBI then requested attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to their settlement agreement with PSS.

Paragraph 10 of the PSS-GBI settlement agreement reads: "In the event that any party breaches this Agreement and an action is brought to enforce said Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to an award of…reasonable attorney's fees and costs."

GBI contended that because PSS was held liable for breaching the agreement when this court granted summary judgment in favor of GBI, GBI is the prevailing party as required by the language of paragraph 10.

GBI also argued that if establishing PSS' liability is not sufficient to define GBI as the prevailing party, the jury award to CDA establishes GBI as the prevailing party.

In light of the court's recent order that set aside the jury verdict which awarded CDA $804,049.73, GBI revised their arguments during the hearing on the motion.

GBI pointed out that because CDA is no longer entitled to a monetary judgment, GBI is in fact now injured and the summary judgment granted in favor of PSS that found GBI was not harmed no longer stand.

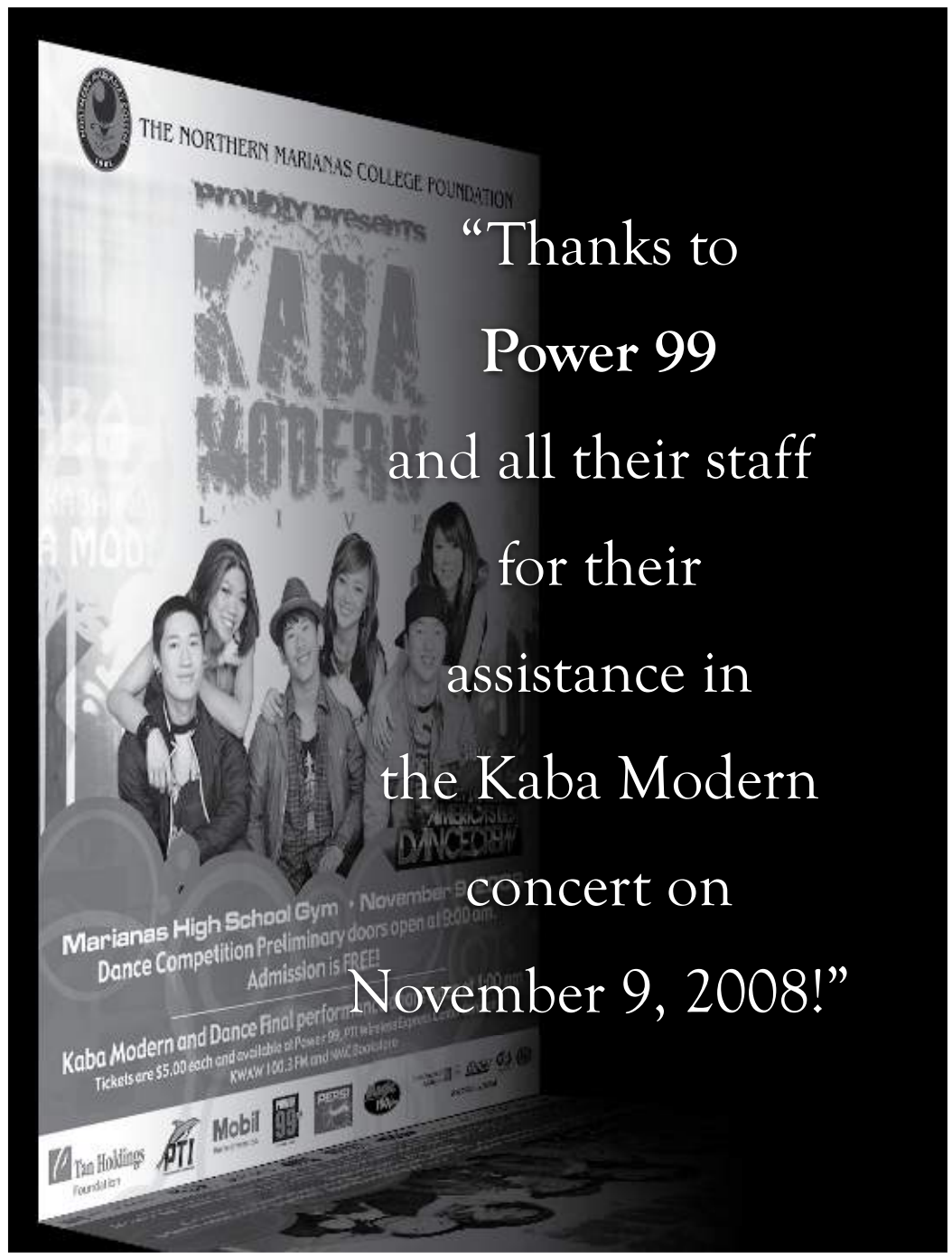
Wiseman disagreed.

"GBI's amended argument, while creative, is inconsequential to the determination of whether or not GBI is the prevailing party," Wiseman said.

The judge said GBI asserts no further reasons why they should be designated the prevailing party.

Wiseman said GBI is not the prevailing party and it would be unreasonable to award them attorneys' fees pursuant to the settlement agreement.

He said there is nothing to support GBI's claim that PSS should pay the costs they incurred in their continued, voluntary involvement in the trial between PSS and CDA.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"Thanks to Power 99 and all their staff for their assistance in the Kaba Modern concert on November 9, 2008!"

CNMI Water Task Force
ITB09-GOV-021

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting Sealed Bids from qualified individuals or firms for the lease of a warehouse on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The procurement specifications and special terms and conditions will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan on or after **November 17,2008.**

Any questions regarding this Invitation for Bids should be addressed to Mr. Pedro Sasamoto, Program Manager, CNMI Water Task Force at (670) 664-2285, or via facsimile at (670) 664-2279 before **December 1, 2008**

Sealed Bids must be marked **"Lease of Warehouse", ITB09-GOV-021**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and four (4) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan no later than **2:00 p.m., local time, December 10, 2008** at which time Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Bid procedures shall be in full compliance with Article 3, Part A, Section 3-102 of the Regulations. Preference is available to U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents as per Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118 and must be submitted with the **BID** if preference claimed.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs. Award of a contract is contingent upon approval from DOI/OIA.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All Bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ Timothy P. Villagomez
Lt. Governor

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Saffron on ice

After the brutal crushing of last year's Saffron Revolution, the military rulers of Burma sought to deflect international repercussions by promising to stop arresting the monks and other dissidents who had led the peaceful protests. They hinted at opening a dialogue with the opposition, including pro-democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Long ago it became clear that these pledges were lies—the arrests have continued, and there has been no dialogue. But the regime's final answer to the demands of Western governments and the U.N. Security Council, and to appeals from would-be conciliators such as Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, came this week. According to the Web site Irrawaddy, 40 opposition leaders have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms by a closed court.

Those punished included 14 leaders of the 88 Generation Students group, each of whom received the draconian term of 65 years. According to Irrawaddy, 25 other activists who joined the September 2007 uprising, including five monks and several women, were given terms of up to 26 years, while the labor activist Su Su Nway was sentenced to 12 1/2 years. The charges included such "crimes" as posting information about the revolt on Web sites and having contacts with foreign media. No lawyers represented the accused; several lawyers were imprisoned last month for complaining about the unfairness of the legal process, and others were banned from the court.

The regime had its reasons for turning its back on Mr. Ban and others seeking a change in its behavior. It is deeply wedded to a domestic political process that calls for holding national elections in 2010—a vote that the generals, including aging leader Than Shwe, believe will institutionalize their rule. As the regime discovered in 1990, the winner of any genuinely free election would be Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters. Hence the determination to destroy the opposition well ahead of the elections by locking up its senior leaders and intimidating others with those lengthy sentences.

Some of those imprisoned weren't cowed. According to Irrawaddy, activist Min Zeya responded to his sentence by sarcastically asking, "Only 65 years?" Another, Mie Mie, shouted: "We will never be frightened!" But what of Mr. Ban or the Western nongovernmental organizations that have lately been advocating more aid and cooperation with the regime? The generals' action mocks them. Mr. Ban said only last week that Burma "is going to be my priority issue." Progress, he said, would require "coordinated efforts from all the countries in the region, particularly India and other neighboring countries, including China." The U.N. chief has his work cut out for him—to say the least.

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You report, we marginalize

By HAROLD MEYERSON
Special to The Washington Post

To: Mr. Roger Ailes
President, Fox News

Dear Roger,

You should be sitting when you read this, because I'm writing to apologize.

In times past, I've had harsh words for Fox for its consistent misrepresentation of the news. In 2003, I cited a survey from the Program for International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) and the Knowledge Network that showed that 45 percent of Fox viewers believed that the United States had uncovered incontrovertible proof that Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida had worked together; that we had found weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; and that a majority of peoples in other lands supported our war in Iraq. In case these bizarre misconceptions merely reflected the a priori beliefs of President Bush's supporters, PIPA further documented that Bush backers who got their news from other networks had a decidedly firmer grasp of the facts.

Now, I don't in any way retract my judgment that you guys were at the time and still are a constant source of right-wing fantasies. It's just that, at least in today's political environment, I'm no longer sure this is a bad thing.

The election has left the Republican Party reeling, its base shrunk to those Southern, Plains and Mountain West states where rural cultures still predominate. The party's smarter strategists are arguing that the worldviews of the social conservatives and free-market extremists who dominate the GOP are either irrelevant or ridiculous to voters in the middle of the political spectrum. "We can't be obsessed with issues that are not the issues that are important to American voters," Jim Greer, chairman of the Florida GOP, told *The New York Times*.

But Fox has won its viewership precisely by promoting such obsessions.

During the campaign just completed, you guys focused on Barack Obama's allegedly Muslim and alien roots and socialist ideology; meanwhile, in the real world, unemployment rose, foreclosures soared and Wall Street went flooey. Over the past eight years, you beat drums for such causes as state intervention in the Terri Schiavo case. You demonized undocumented immigrants (okay, CNN's Lou Dobbs gave you a run for your money on that one). You fed the Republican base with a steady diet of bile—and now that bilious base is the biggest impediment to the Republicans' repositioning themselves so that they can win elections again.

Reach out to Latinos—the inescapably growing segment of the American electorate that voted overwhelmingly for Obama after four years of GOP immigrant-bashing? Not if Fox viewers have anything to say about it. Not after you've drummed into their heads that the Latino immigrant population is some looming terrorist threat.

Modify that opposition to stem-cell research? Tone down the ridicule of people in public life who have advanced degrees? Call off the Republican war on science that kicks in whenever science runs counter to right-wing fundamentalism in religion or economics? Not if the Hannity faithful can help it.

You're not alone in reinforcing those beliefs that marginalize the Republican right, of course. You've got plenty of help from Rush and all the little Limbaughs who dominate talk radio. But together with your allies, you haul truckloads of troglodyte garbage to your flock.

And the way your flock sees it, the modifications that Republicans need to make to become competitive again in American politics—acknowledging a need for state intervention to make the economy work, backing off the primitive religiosity, embracing a more tolerant pluralism—amount to nothing less than heresy.

As an aide to Richard Nixon back in the day, Roger, you were around for the birth of the Southern strategy—the policy to move all those disgruntled racist Southern whites into Republican ranks. But the party as Nixon would have recognized it ceased to exist after the Republicans captured Congress in 1994. Since then, the national Republican Party has been dominated by far-right Southern legislative leaders—Newt Gingrich, Tom DeLay, Trent Lott—and by George W. Bush. The past two elections, Republicans have grown weaker everywhere but the white rural South—the region that remains the least educated and least diverse.

And rather than present these voters with a picture of a complex, changing world, you guys at Fox serve chiefly to reinforce their fears, to paint people who hold different viewpoints as alien and threatening.

In that sense, your work remains dangerous and disintegrative to the nation. But it is also, more narrowly, tactically, for now, a great gift to liberals and Democrats. You ensure the ongoing Palinization and marginalization—electorally, the terms are synonymous—of the Republican Party.

And to think that you're doing all this not on the Democratic National Committee's dime but on Rupert Murdoch's.

Cheers from your new fan,
Harold

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

If Dubai goes down, it's taking others with it

By ROSA BROOKS
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Brooks is a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. E-mail her at rbrooks@latimescolumnists.com.

So enough about the struggling middle class. In this global financial crisis, how are the really rich holding up?

To find out, I spent several days in Dubai, the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates and world capital of conspicuous consumption.

So far, the ultra-rich are bearing up well. If the scene at Dubai's luxury Burj al Arab hotel is anything to go by, there's still robust demand for hotel rooms that start at about $1,500 a night and bikinis that cost $800. This level of consumption is impressive, especially when you consider that the super-rich must struggle with a serious unemployment problem—almost none of the designer-clad men and women who grace the Burj al Arab appear to have, uh, jobs. But they cope bravely with this situation, finding in it an opportunity to pay culturally enriching visits to Dubai's many beaches, nightclubs and shopping malls.

OK, for us normal human beings, it's hard not to be revolted by Dubai, which boasts the world's tallest hotel (the aforementioned Burj al Arab, which is shaped like a sailboat and soars in solitary splendor over its own artificial island), one of the world's largest indoor ski slopes and the largest shopping mall in the region. Crammed with cold-eyed Russian oligarchs, coked-out London pop stars and the spoiled princelings of global finance, Dubai is repulsive enough to make most ordinary mortals start rooting for the collapse of global capitalism.

I visited Dubai as a participant in the World Economic Forum's Summit on the Global Agenda, where I was assigned to a working group on "fragile states"—though in the midst of Dubai's opulence, it felt strange to be discussing the problems of the world's weakest and least stable states (Afghanistan, Congo, Pakistan, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Haiti and the like).

Who can contemplate poverty and war when hot-air balloon trips and visits to the Gold Souk are on offer? Somewhere, no doubt, there were poor people, people dying for lack of basic medical care and militias rampaging through refugee camps, beating, raping and killing those in their way. But not in Dubai.

But even ultra-affluent Dubai is fragile these days. You see, this gem of the postmodern, globalized economy doesn't really produce anything of value—its oil accounts for only about 5 percent of gross domestic product. Its economy relies on services, tourism and...that's about it, actually. Those elaborate hotels, malls, amusement parks and skyscrapers? Heavily leveraged—built out of the shifting sands and the same intoxicating thin air that sustained Wall Street until recently.

And Dubai may be going down. The oil-rich neighbors that helped finance its boom have seen oil prices plummet, and, worldwide, credit for speculative real-estate projects is drying up. On Wednesday, the Dubai Financial Market closed lower than at any time in nearly four years; down 61 percent this year. Sooner or later, even the suntanned loafers here are going to feel the pinch.

I'm tempted to cheer, but, unfortunately, the pain won't be confined to the super-rich.

Nearly 80 percent of the United Arab Emirates' population is made up of migrant laborers brought in to build Dubai's skyscrapers and clean its luxurious hotels. These migrants come from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and other poor and fragile regions. Once in Dubai, they work long hours in poor conditions, earning an average of $4 a day.

But it's still more than they'd earn at home, and the wages they send back to their families help fuel development in their own countries. The U.A.E. is the world's third-largest sender of remittances; its migrants send an estimated $6.5 billion to their home countries each year, an amount that rivals (and for some countries dwarfs) formal international development aid. If opportunities in Dubai (and other wealthy, migrant-dependent regions) diminish—and they will—many of those migrants will be forced back home, reducing remittances and increasing the pool of labor in fragile states already struggling with high unemployment rates.

The root of the global crisis lies in esoteric financial practices devised by elites, but the fallout will rain down on the globe's poorest states.

On Saturday, Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum—prime minister of the U.A.E. and ruler of Dubai—reminded World Economic Forum Summit participants that "we live in a global village."

It was a safe cliche. But it was also a polite way to remind the assembled movers and shakers that if Dubai goes down, it will take a lot of others down with it.

Mom, apple pie and hope

By GREGORY RODRIGUEZ
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Rodriguez, a columnist for the Times' opinion pages, is director of the California Fellows Program at the New America Foundation. E-mail Rodriguez at grodriguez@latimescolumnists.com.

There's little doubt that Barack Obama's redemptive message of change grabbed Americans by the throat. After all, it's in times full of fear and despair that people are hungry for hope. Obama's triumph and victory speech were moving not only because they reminded us that this country is based on the idea of possibilities but because, for at least a moment, much of the nation believed that hope was reborn. And that raises a question: Why are Americans so obsessed with hope?

The American dream—anyone can succeed, second chances abound, we are what we make ourselves—is one way to define "hope." An October survey by J. Walter Thompson revealed that 77 percent of Americans think the American dream is part of what makes this country so dynamic. That helps explain why 78 percent also agreed that the next president "needs to breathe new life" into that dream. So hope is an inextricable part of our national identity. Without it, most agree, America wouldn't be America.

Historically, writers have ascribed this essential idealism or optimism to the nation's awesome natural abundance and its wide-open spaces, which have allowed for geographic—and social—mobility. In the 1780s, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur made the connection between abundance and the incipient American culture of aspiration: "There is room for every body in America; has he any particular talent, or industry ... he exerts it in order to procure a livelihood, and it succeeds." But as inspiring as that observation might be, it doesn't cut to the heart of the matter. That's because the greatest inspiration for hope is, well, fear. The fear of failure.

Think about it. Puritan dogma, from which much of American ideology stems, held that those early migrants had been selected by God for "an errand into the wilderness." When John Winthrop, aboard the Arabella as it approached the New World, urged his flock to create "a city upon a hill," his words were as much a warning as an exhortation. He believed that the Puritans had entered into a covenant with God and that they were ordained to establish God's kingdom and be an example to the world. If they failed, he said in his famous 1630 sermon, "We shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of this good land whither we are going."

Fail, and you're damned. Add that to one other bit of bedrock Americanness—that we're a "nation of immigrants"—and voila, you get a people terrified of screwing up.

Why? Because even though throughout our history immigrants have been some of the scrappiest and most resourceful of Americans, it's also true that they tended to be people who had failed, for whatever reason, to achieve in their home countries.

In the early 19th century, when Alexis de Tocqueville remarked that "ambition is the universal feeling" in America, he also claimed that, in the U.S., the rich as well as the poor were spurred to success by "the most imperious of all necessities, that of not sinking in the world."

It's not easy living in a future-oriented country whose culture is based on the idea of mobility, rebirth and hope. Mobility and the constant process of "becoming" breed insecurity. As historian David M. Potter wrote in 1954, the more we believe in mobility, the more we reject the idea that, high and low, each person has his or her rightful place in society. "Whereas the principle of status affirms that a minor position may be worthy, the principle of mobility, as Americans have construed it, regards such a station as ... the proof of personal failure." He goes on to say that "the denial of (set) status deprives the individual of one of his deepest psychological needs," and describes the "hazards and insecurities" of the fluidity of American life.

Our national cult of hope, therefore, is a balm to soothe our social and culture instability. We fetishize hope because it helps us as we grasp at a favorable future. We wrap ourselves in it like no other people in the world because we tell ourselves failure isn't an option. We have no choice but to cheer when a president-elect tells us we can put our hands "on the arc of history and bend it once more toward the hope of a better day."

And we're right to cheer. If America ever did fail to come up with future prospects, plans, dreams and hopes, it would, in all the most important ways, surely cease to exist.

Letters to the Editor

Where were you?

The only adverse consequences that took place years ago with the minimum wage was it kept our local U.S. citizens unemployed due to the demand for cheap labor by the garment industry and the business community, something that Mr. Rasa was well aware of as he once was former speaker of the House, a lawmaker.

As president of Taotao Tano, I was personally and heavily involved in the historical field hearing held in August 2007 by U.S. congressional members Donna Christensen of the Virgin Islands, Madaleine Bordallo of Guam, Eni Faleomavaega of American Samoa, Insular Affairs' David Cohen, and numerous dignitaries testifying on H.R. 3079 (later changed to S.1634 and now U.S. Public Law 110-229), extending federal control of our immigration system.

The question is, where was Mr. Oscar Rasa when all this hearings and public hearing took place? I don'tt believe that a huge issue had taken place in our homeland and he was not aware of it.

It's rather contradictory that a former Covenant negotiator and a speaker of the House waited until PL 110-229 passed to come and show his opposition. Two decades have lapsed and with previous threats of a federal takeover, it's only now that you and Gov. Benigno Fitial noticed that we have a Covenant agreement in political union with the United States?

This federal lawsuit is only hindering our relationship with U.S. Congress and the federal government. The only solution right now is to seek a seat at the table if it's not to late and discuss, submit and negotiate with the federal government in the making and implementation of the federal regulations.

The governor and Mr. Oscar Rasa had known for years but the preference of hiring a corrupt lobbyist at our expense kept our local indigenous Northern Mariana descent citizens at bay, unemployed and unskilled in the trades field. I believe that a taxpayer lawsuit is already warranted against this administration for its continued bias and ignorance that the people of the Commonwealth have long suffered enough.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

Too generous

Imagine, just less than six weeks ago, executives of the Laolao Golf Resort came out in the papers and said they're ready to proceed with the multi-million dollar project. A month after that exciting words, they were on the paper again, this time, they were asking for a tax break, citing numerous reasons, i.e., economy is not so good, low tourism arrivals, etc.

They were granted the lease, I believe they were also granted the tax break, and now, they are scaling down. What kind of investors are we allowing to invest in the CNMI? They came and said we have money to invest and a few months later, they asked for a tax break. Worst of all, our leaders grant them their request.

I know a lot of our people are aware of our economic situation, and I'm also very sure that this "investors" are also aware. The point is, they said they have money to invest, but just when they were granted what they want, they turn around and take advantage of our soft-hearted leaders. The problem is we are too generous, too eager without doing a proper screening of the so-called investors, or some are too lenient.

Joseph M. Palacios
Dandan, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°

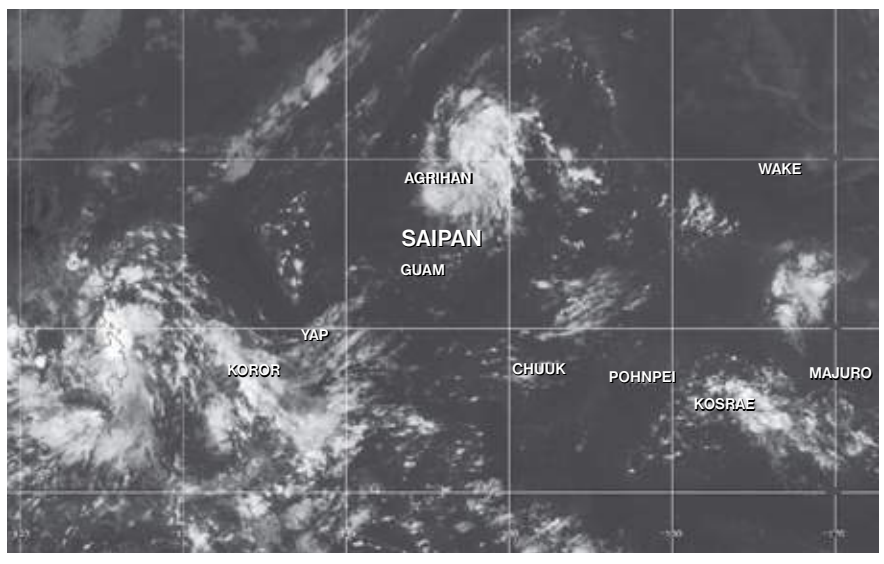
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲84	▼76
Palau	Thundershowers	▲88	▼77
Yap	Thundershowers	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Thundershowers	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼74
Kosrae	Thundershowers	▲89	▼77
Majuro	Thundershowers	▲84	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲69	▼57
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼34
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲82	▼73
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲80	▼71
London	Showers	▲57	▼47
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲93	▼58
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼75
Melbourne	Showers	▲65	▼45
Miami	Showers	▲86	▼64
New York	Rain	▲60	▼45
Osaka	Cloudy	▲63	▼56
Paris	Cloudy	▲58	▼43
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲66	▼48
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲63	▼48
Salem	Cloudy	▲56	▼39
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼52
Seoul	Showers	▲52	▼28
Tokyo	Showers	▲63	▼53
Washington, DC	Rain	▲65	▼43

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from 7N130E to end at 2N136E. Scattered showers and few thunderstorms associated with the trough are found around Palau and south of Yap or within an area from 11N131E to 6N140E to 2N140E to 3N133E back to 11N131E. A mid to upper-level low centered northeast of the Mariana Islands at 20N147E is accompanied by a surface trough extending from 12N146E to 24N150E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are within an area from 24N147E to 19N156E to 15N148E to 19N144E back to 24N147E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms in two areas. One area from near Kosrae southeastward to the southern Marshall Islands is within 150 miles of a line from 7N163E to 3N172E. The other area is within 125 miles of a line from 4N174E eastward past 5N180. A surface trough north of Kwajalein Atoll extends from 10N168E to 15N168E with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 125 miles of the trough axis.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:41AM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
9:53AM Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
3:11PM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
7:54PM Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:19AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:19AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:20AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:20AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:21AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:38PM	8:09AM
Sunday	8:45PM	9:15AM
Monday	9:51PM	10:16AM
Tuesday	10:52PM	11:09AM
Wednesday	11:50PM	11:56AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 11, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:30am	6:20am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

OZ 608	1:30am	4:30am	2,6
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:25am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:15am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:40am+1	3,4,6,7

Shanghai-Saipan

OZ 607	5:30pm	12:30am+1	1,5
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship: 10:30am
Sunday PM Worship: 7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

NOVEMBER 15, 1999

BOE certifies poll results

The final tally of votes from the Nov. 6 elections, including the more than 200 absentee ballots tabulated Friday, did not change the preliminary poll results except for the Board of Education race in Rota. BOE Chairman Miguel M. Sablan certified the final results Friday. Of the 424 absentee ballots received by the Board of Elections, only 236 were counted as "good ballots," while 188, or 44 percent of the total number, were rejected as "bad ballots."

44 % of ballots wasted

At least 44 percent of the total number of absentee ballots received by the Board of Elections were wasted because of the voters' failure to follow instructions, BOE Executive Director Gregorio Sablan said Friday. Of the 424 absentee ballots, only 236 were validated and counted, while 188 were thrown away as "bad ballots."

NOVEMBER 15, 2000

Outer Cove lease faces termination

The House transportation committee will propose termination of the current lease on the controversial Outer Cove Marina in a move intended to bail out Marine Revitalization Corp. from its present financial woes. Committee chair Rep. Rosiky F. Camacho said a bill is set to be filed within the next few days mapping out the plan following review of pending legislation.

Teno OKs amendments to domestic violence law

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio approved changes to the recently-signed law against spousal abuse and family violence, clarifying questionable provisions raised earlier by Superior Court Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan. Key amendments he favored as provided under Public Law 12-30, which he signed yesterday, included elimination of clerical assistance by the court in filing motions like restraining order as well as reinstatement of court fees in seeking such judicial relief.

NOVEMBER 15, 2001

Investment inquiries flood CDA

Despite grim economic projections, a group of off-island businessmen expressed interest in investing on the islands, according to Commonwealth Development Authority Board Chair John S. Tenorio. Tenorio said that, last week, a 15-man team of US-based investors visited the CNMI to hold an ocular inspection and check necessary infrastructure on Saipan and Tinian.

NMI delegates in NY for bioterrorism conference

Ten CNMI delegates to this week's bioterrorism conference in New York were among the victims of an anthrax scare before their boarded plane took off from Honolulu to the US mainland. But Health Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez immediately said that none of the delegates were infected with anthrax since the suspicious substance on the plane turned out to be just a spice used in Indian delicacies.

NOVEMBER 15, 2002

Stink turns off tourists

Marine sports companies complained yesterday that foul smell coming from drying seaweeds and the ongoing drainage cleanup operations at the Saipan lagoon behind the hotel area is a major turn-off to tourists frequenting the place for water sports. One of the several water sport companies situated behind Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach and the Hyatt Regency Hotel-Saipan was forced to close operations for a day due to the slow turnout of tourists in the area.

'Were rules followed in filing lawsuit?'

Gov. Juan N. Babauta questioned the legitimacy of the lawsuit filed against him and the CNMI government by the Civil Service Commission, saying it needs to be determined whether a two-thirds majority of commissioners voted to have the lawsuit filed. At the same time, he said it should be looked into whether commission chair Vicente M. Sablan is the legitimate chairman of the civil service panel, considering that there are questions as to whether there was, in fact, a quorum when he was elected to chair the commission.

Business

October retail sales expected to be weak

WASHINGTON (AP)—Consumers, the backbone of the economy, are taking a beating from the worst economic crisis in seven decades and there is little prospect of that letting up soon.

Recent news has been dreadful, with the government reporting that there were a half-million new applications for unemployment benefits last week, news that came on top of a report last week that the jobless rate shot up to a 14-year high of 6.5 percent in October.

More information on the state of the economy is scheduled to be released Friday with Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke speaking to an international conference in Frankfurt, Germany, and the Commerce Department releasing a report on retail sales for the month of October.

Many economists expect the report on retail sales to be especially grim, given the bad news on employment, the financial crisis and plunging consumer confidence. Analysts are looking for retail sales to have fallen 2 percent in October, almost double the 1.2 percent drop in September, which had been the biggest setback in three years.

A survey of the nation's big chain retail stores found that retailers suffered through the weakest October in at least 39 years even though they tried to gin up more sales by a frenzied round of price cutting.

But with many economists convinced the financial turmoil of the past two months has pushed the country into a severe recession, possibly as bad as the 1981-82 downturn, retailers are braced for what could be a dismal Christmas sales season.

The outgoing Bush administration, however, is trying to bolster confidence as much as possible.

President George W. Bush will be the host for the first-ever leaders' summit of the Group of 20, which includes not only the world's wealthiest nations but also major developing countries such as Russia, China, Brazil and India. The G-20 leaders were meeting in Washington for two days of talks that will wrap up Saturday.

Bush on Friday defended his administration's response to the financial crisis, which has included massive amounts of government assistance to banks and outright government takeovers of the country's biggest mortgage finance companies.

October budget deficit hits record of $237.2B

WASHINGTON (AP)—The federal government began the new budget year with a record deficit of $237.2 billion, reflecting the billions of dollars the government has started to pay out to rescue the financial system.

The Treasury Department said Thursday that the deficit for the first month in the new budget year was the highest monthly imbalance on record. It was far bigger than analysts expected, over four times larger than the October 2007 deficit of $56.8 billion, and more than half the total for all of last year.

The big surge reflected the government spending $115 billion to buy stock in the nation's largest banks. Those were the first payments made from the $700 billion government rescue program passed by Congress to deal with the most severe financial crisis to hit the country since the 1930s.

The October deficit began a period in which economists are forecasting the red ink for the entire year could well hit $1 trillion, reflecting what many expect to be a severe recession, which will depress tax revenue, and the heavy costs of the financial system bailout.

President-elect Barack Obama has said that getting the economy back on track will be his top priority and has promised to work with Congress to pass a second stimulus program.

The $237.2 billion deficit for October included total government spending of $402 billion, a record in terms of outlays.

The spending figure included $115 billion paid to some of the country's largest banks to buy stock, the beginning of a program in which the government will spend $250 billion before the end of the year to take ownership shares in hundreds and potentially thousands of banks. The goal is to bolster banks' balance sheets so that they will resume more normal lending and keep the country from falling into a prolonged recession.

The deficit also was boosted by the government's move to purchase $21.5 billion in mortgage-backed securities, an effort the Bush administration announced when it took control of mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in September because of rising losses in that market.

Government receipts in October totaled $164.8 billion, down 7.5 percent from October 2007, reflecting the impact on revenues from the slumping economy.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Wildfire destroys homes near Santa Barbara, Calif.

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP)—A brush fire destroyed an unknown number of homes Thursday in the tony enclave of Montecito, forcing residents to evacuate what has long been a hideaway for the rich and famous. It was not immediately clear if anyone was injured or exactly how many homes had burned in the community of 10,000. Television images showed one destroyed house that appeared to have a turret. Flames had engulfed several multimillion-dollar homes and widespread power outages were reported in the area. "It looked like lava coming down a volcano," Leslie Hollis Lopez told The Associated Press as she gathered her belongings from her house.

Neb. parents rush to leave kids before law changes

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP)—The mother was running out of more than patience when she abandoned her 18-year-old daughter at a hospital over the weekend under Nebraska's safe-haven law. She was also running out of time: She knew that state lawmakers would soon meet in a special session to amend the ill-fated law so that it would apply to newborns only. "Where am I going to get help if they change the law?" said the mother, who lives in Lincoln and asked to not be identified by name to protect her adopted child. To the state's surprise and embarrassment, more than half of the 33 children legally abandoned under the safe-haven law since it took effect in mid-July have been teenagers. But state officials may have inadvertently made things worse with their hesitant response to the problem: The number of drop-offs has almost tripled to about three a week since Gov. Dave Heineman announced on Oct. 29 that lawmakers would rewrite the law.

White powder sent to Mormon temples in Utah, LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Letters containing a suspicious white powder were sent Thursday to Mormon temples in Los Angeles and Salt Lake City that were the sites of protests against the church's support of California's gay marriage ban. The temple in the Westwood area of Los Angeles was evacuated before a hazardous materials crew determined the envelope's contents were not toxic, said FBI spokesman Jason Pack. The temple in downtown Salt Lake City, where the church is based, received a similar envelope containing a white powder that spilled onto a clerk's hand. The room was decontaminated and the envelope taken by the FBI for testing. The clerk showed no signs of illness, but the scare shut down a building at Temple Square for more than an hour, said Scott Freitag, a spokesman for the Salt Lake City Fire Department.

A million could attend Obama inauguration

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration is expected to draw 1 million-plus to the capital, and already some lawmakers have stopped taking ticket requests and hotels have booked up.

Some people are bartering on Craigslist for places to stay for the Jan. 20 ceremony when the Illinois senator takes the oath of office. They are offering cash or even help with dishes for residents willing to open up their homes.

The National Park Service, which is planning for an inaugural crowd of at least 1 million, will clear more viewing space along the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route. Jumbo TV screens will line the National Mall so people can watch the inauguration and parade, park service spokesman David Barna said Thursday.

The District of Columbia's delegate, Eleanor Holmes Norton, is urging planners to use arenas and stadiums to help with overflow crowds wanting to view the ceremonies on big-screen TVs. She is also urging churches to hold viewing parties.

"You can't judge by past inaugurations. It's going to break all the records," Norton said. "They're going to come with or without tickets. ... It's each man and woman for himself."

The city's police chief, Cathy Lanier, said organizers brought in an additional 3,000 officers from forces around the country to help with the last inauguration. This time, the request probably will be for about 4,000 officers.

AP

In this Nov. 4, 2008 file photo, President-elect Barack Obama's family walks off stage as he addresses supporters during his election night party at Grant Park in Chicago.

Because of a lawsuit, people should have more standing room along the crowded parade route. War protesters sued after President George W. Bush's last inauguration, forcing the government to open up more free public viewing space between the Capitol and White House.

U.S. District Judge Paul Friedman ruled in March that the park service violated its own rules by giving preferential treatment in ticketing for bleacher seats along the parade route for supporters of the government over its critics. Friedman wrote the inauguration "is not a private event."

New rules to be issued Monday will lower the number of ticketed bleacher seats along the parade route from 20,000 seats to 8,700, leaving much more of the route open to people without tickets, Barna said.

VP-elect Biden hopes to be a hands-on No. 2

WASHINGTON (AP)—Vice President-elect Joe Biden was all smiles Thursday when he paid a courtesy call the man he will succeed, Dick Cheney. But he has insisted he wants to be nothing like him. Biden has called Cheney "the most dangerous vice president we've had probably in American history" and said he couldn't name a single good thing Cheney had done.

But even if he won't acknowledge any similarities, there's one way that Biden wants to be like Cheney—a strong partner in governing the country.

Biden is proving to be a hands-on No. 2 to President-elect Barack Obama. He is carving out his own niche, specializing in foreign affairs, his area of expertise for decades in the Senate, and sticking close to Obama.

Past vice presidents have often been relegated to ceremonial roles, without major input on daily decisions. But the last two vice presidents, Cheney and Al Gore, have been extraordinarily involved and insisted on private weekly lunches with their bosses.

Biden has said he told Obama, before accepting the running mate slot, that he wouldn't want a peripheral assignment like reorganizing government, which Gore took on, along with other tasks. In a New Yorker interview last month, he said he told Obama: "I don't want to be a vice president who is not part of the major decisions you make."

Biden himself will have an experienced aide who can help his voice be heard in the White House. He chose former Gore chief of staff Ron Klain to fill the same job for him, Democrats said Thursday.

Biden will certainly have a special interest in the Iraq war, with his son scheduled to deploy there this month.

So far, Biden has been working closely with Obama. He has been in almost all the president-elect's meetings at his new government office space in Chicago and has been dispatched to make calls to several foreign leaders.

Biden was asked to smooth over a miscommunication following Obama's phone call with Polish President Lech Kaczynski last week. Kaczynski issued a statement saying Obama vowed to continue with President Bush's missile defense project. But Obama's advisers denied it, and the Polish foreign minister later said it was a misinterpretation on their part.

Biden called Kaczynski a couple of days later to explain that the Obama administration will assess the program before deciding whether to stick with it.

He also spoke this week with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Jordan's King Abdullah II, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Brown's predecessor, Tony Blair. And he spoke with Israel's foreign and defense ministers, along with Israeli opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, according to a statement issued Thursday by the Obama transition team.

Biden has said he'd like to use his 36 years of experience in the Senate, including leadership of the Judiciary and Foreign Relations committees, to help push Obama's agenda in Congress. It's longtime insider's experience that Obama lacks and a role that has not been Cheney's focus.

Officials: Sen. Clinton eyed as secretary of state

CHICAGO (AP)—Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton is among the candidates that President-elect Barack Obama is considering for secretary of state, according to two Democratic officials in close contact with the Obama transition team.

Clinton, the former first lady who pushed Obama hard for the Democratic presidential nomination, was rumored to be a contender for the job last week, but the talk died down as party activists questioned whether she was best-suited to be the nation's top diplomat in an Obama administration.

Clinton

The talk resumed in Washington and elsewhere Thursday, a day after Obama named several former aides to President Bill Clinton to help run his transition effort.

The two Democratic officials who spoke Thursday did so on the condition of anonymity to avoid angering Obama and his staff. Clinton spokesman Philippe Reines referred questions to the Obama transition team, which said it had no comment.

Other people frequently mentioned for the State Department job are Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., and New Mexico's Democratic governor, Bill Richardson.

Blast flattens Colo. restaurant; one dead, seven hurt

PUEBLO, Colo. (AP)—An explosion laid waste to a restaurant and a shop Thursday in downtown Pueblo, killing one person, injuring at least seven and forcing several blocks to evacuate. Crews pulled a survivor from the rubble more than four hours after the blast.

The cause of the explosion was being investigated. A leaking natural gas pipe was found in the street next to the restaurant, but it wasn't clear if the pipe was ruptured by the explosion or contributed to it, Fire Department spokesman Woody Percival said. The pipe was capped.

Authorities had no reason to believe anyone was left in the buildings after crews searched the area, Percival said late Thursday. Buildings for several blocks in all directions remained evacuated.

A total of seven people, including the woman who died, were transported to the hospital. An eighth person went unassisted later, Percival said. He didn't know the conditions of the patients.

Authorities did not know whether the restaurant was open when the explosion occurred around 2:30 p.m. or how many people were inside.

The person who died was one of two women rescued from a shop next to the Branch Inn restaurant, Fire Chief Chris Riley said. At least five of the injured people were in the restaurant, Percival said.

Firefighters dug a man out of the rubble of the restaurant around 6:30 p.m. Riley said he was conscious and talking.

Asia

China to ensure grain self-sufficiency

BEIJING (AP)—China is aiming to produce virtually all the grain it needs for at least the next decade despite a growing population and declining farmland because of urbanization, climate change and other factors.

The goal is for China to keep producing more than 95 percent of its grain needs until 2020, said Zhang Xiaoqiang, vice chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission, China's powerful economic planning body.

The self-sufficiency plan is intended to make China less dependent on imports from countries such as the U.S. and Australia, said Wang Xiaoyi, an agricultural analyst at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

A policy paper said farms have to become more efficient. To improve productivity, exchanges of land rights by rural dwellers should be promoted to enable development of bigger and more intensive farming businesses, it said.

"We must basically rely on ourselves to ensure grain supply," Zang said as he introduced the plan for grain self-sufficiency and security.

Report: NKorea hints it will expel SKoreans

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean military officials told South Korean business managers to move their factories out of the North, a report said Friday—a strong sign the regime is serious about shutting down the border in a further deterioration of inter-Korean ties.

The high-level military delegation made the comments during a rare inspection of a joint industrial park in Kaesong last week, South Korea's Chosun Ilbo newspaper reported.

The newspaper quoted a South Korean businessman with a factory in Kaesong who met with government officials Thursday, a day after the North said it would shut its side of the border on Dec. 1.

Forcing South Korean firms to pull out of the joint business complex in the city just north of the heavily fortified border that divides the two Koreas—a project that fueled hopes of reconciliation—could further escalate tension on the divided peninsula.

Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon was not immediately available for comment Friday. The delegation also told South Korean businessmen that the sprawling complex sits on land belonging to the North Korean military, the newspaper said.

The North's military pulled some of its troops and equipment from Kaesong to clear the way for South Korean firms to set up their factories there in an apparent move to boost cross-border cooperation and earn hard currency. It was a huge concession from the military.

South Korean firms began to set up factories in Kaesong in 2004 at a time of warming relations between the communist North Korean leadership and South Korea's then-liberal administration.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Lawyers plan collective lawsuit over tainted milk

BEIJING (AP)—Lawyers for dozens of families whose children were sickened by tainted milk decided Thursday to go ahead with a class-action lawsuit against a dairy, hoping to pressure Chinese authorities still dithering over compensation. After weeks of discussions, the 15 lawyers decided to bundle cases involving nearly 100 families into a single lawsuit against state-owned Shijiazhuang Sanlu Group Co., the dairy at the center of China's worst food safety crisis in years. The lawsuit seeks medical and other expenses, payments for trauma and compensation for the families of those who died. "The victims have suffered and they deserve to be compensated," Beijing-based lawyer Xu Zhiyong said. Going ahead with the lawsuit marks a significant uptick in confrontation between the families and the authoritarian government in a scandal that Beijing has tried to keep out of the public eye in recent weeks.

Pakistan officials: missiles kill 9 in northwest

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistani intelligence officials say a suspected U.S. missile strike has killed at least nine people in a village near the Afghan border. Two officials said the strike hit a house in the North Waziristan tribal region before dawn on Friday. There was no immediate word on the identity of the victims. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media. North Waziristan is a stronghold of Taliban and al-Qaida militants suspected of mounting attacks on U.S. troops in neighboring Afghanistan. It is part of the lawless Pakistani tribal belt where U.S. officials suspect that Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri are hiding.

Convoy attack kills US soldier, 8 Afghan civilians

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide car bomber attacked a U.S. military convoy passing through a crowded livestock market in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday, killing at least eight civilians and an American soldier and wounding 74 people, Afghan officials said. The American patrol was hit in the Bati Kot district of Nangarhar province, said Lt. Cmdr. Walter Matthews, a U.S. military spokesman. The convoy was about 90 miles east of Kabul on the main road linking the capital to the Pakistan border at Torkham. Hours after the attack, the charred and twisted remains of cars still smoldered on the tree-lined street. No one took responsibility, but the attack bore the hallmarks of those conducted by Taliban militants, who regularly use suicide attackers and car bombs.

15 feared dead in Indonesian landslide

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Rescuers searched for survivors Friday after a landslide crashed into a village in central Indonesia, killing two people and burying at least 13 others, a disaster official said. Mud came tumbling down from hills surrounding Nyalindung, a village in West Java province, following days of torrential rain that inundated more than 50 homes, said Rustam Pakaya of the Disaster Crisis Center. So far, two bodies were recovered, he said, but 13 others were missing and feared dead. Many are children. Residents have joined rescuers in searching for survivors, most digging with their bare hands or using farm tools, Pakaya said. The mud blocked many roads, making it hard for heavy machinery to reach the disaster zone.

World

Medvedev seeks fresh start in Russia-US ties

AP

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev speaks during the 2008 EU-Russia Industrialists' Round Table Annual Conference in Cannes, southern France, Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008.

CANNES, France (AP)—Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said Thursday that U.S. President-elect Barack Obama's move to the White House is a chance for a fresh start between the two powerful, nuclear-armed nations, whose ties have deteriorated over the past decade.

"We are ready to develop really good-neighborly relations with the U.S.," Medvedev told business leaders in Cannes, France. "I'm very glad the president-elect looks at these problems ... as a priority for U.S. foreign policy."

"For us, relations with the U.S. are a foreign policy priority, too ... given the special role and mission of our two countries," Medvedev said.

"The new administration will have the chance, if not to start with a totally clean slate, then at least to look at the issues without prejudice," he said.

Last week, as congratulations poured in to Obama from around the world on his election victory, Medvedev gave a stern warning about U.S. plans to base missile defense units in Eastern Europe, saying Russia would react by basing short-range missiles in the western territory of Kaliningrad.

Medvedev and other Kremlin officials have backed off slightly since then, however. In an interview with French journalists broadcast Thursday, Medvedev again suggested that if Washington halts its plans, Moscow would do the same.

Medvedev said he had had a good telephone conversation with Obama last week and that the two men had agreed they should meet face-to-face as soon as possible.

"I hope... we'll be able to find a way out of these (difficult) situations, which we haven't been able to do with our current colleagues," he said in the televised interview.

"The new president has a big reserve of good will. He was elected during a very difficult period. I wish him success in dealing with what lies before him," he said.

UN: Clouds of pollution threaten glaciers, health

BEIJING (AP)—A dirty brown haze sometimes more than a mile thick is darkening skies not only over vast areas of Asia, but also in the Middle East, southern Africa and the Amazon Basin, changing weather patterns around the world and threatening health and food supplies, the U.N. reported Thursday.

The huge smog-like plumes, caused mainly by the burning of fossil fuels and firewood, are known as "atmospheric brown clouds."

When mixed with emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases blamed for warming the earth's atmosphere like a greenhouse, they are the newest threat to the global environment, according to a report commissioned by the U.N. Environment Program.

"All of this points to an even greater and urgent need to look at emissions across the planet," said Achim Steiner, head of Kenya-based UNEP, which funded the report with backing from Italy, Sweden and the United States.

Brown clouds are caused by an unhealthy mix of particles, ozone and other chemicals that come from cars, coal-fired power plants, burning fields and wood-burning stoves. First identified by the report's lead researcher in 1990, the clouds were depicted Thursday as being more widespread and causing more environmental damage than previously known.

WORLD BRIEFS

Israel military: Missiles target militant target

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli aircraft have fired missiles at a target in northern Gaza as a five-month truce between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers continues to unravel. Israel's military says the strike targeted rocket launchers. A Hamas radio station is reporting that two militants from the Islamic Jihad organization were wounded. Dr. Moaiya Hassanain of the Gaza Health Ministry says Friday's strike was aimed at a Hamas police installation. The cease-fire began disintegrating last week when Israeli forces entered Gaza to try destroy what the military said was a tunnel dug by militants. Eleven militants have been killed in more than a week of fighting, and more than 130 rockets and mortars have been fired from Gaza at Israel.

UK says it fears terror suspect could escape

LONDON (AP)—Bail should be revoked for a radical Muslim preacher accused of raising funds for terror groups because he is planning to go into hiding, the British government argued Thursday. Britain's Home Office said that Abu Qatada—once described as Osama bin Laden's representative in Europe—has extensive contacts that could help him evade authorities. "Should Abu Qatada abscond his supporters would base a significant propaganda campaign on this, further boosting Abu Qatada's already substantial extremist profile and influence which would damage U.K. national security," Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said in a statement to Britain's Special Immigration Appeals Commission. Abu Qatada was re-arrested over the weekend, apparently for a bail violation, according to British newspaper reports.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, November 15, 2008

Peso slips to 2-year low of 49.49:$1

By DORIS DUMLAO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The peso slid Thursday to 49.495 against the dollar, its lowest close in two years, as offshore investors turned more jittery over the bleak global economic growth outlook.

The local currency shed P0.505 from Wednesday's close of P48.99 as the momentum continued to favor the greenback given the massive de-leveraging or clean-up of balance sheets by battered global financial institutions that, in turn, was attracting flows to the western world.

With the peso closing near the year's low of 49.58, Banco de Oro Unibank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas said the local currency could test the P50 mark against the dollar by next week.

"It seems that the continued prospects for de-leveraging and risk aversion have kept the dollar strong. At the same time, there is demand for dollars from local corporations," he said.

Ravelas said many local enterprises were now scrambling to cover their foreign exchange requirements.

"Remember that at the start of the year, the expectation was that the peso would strengthen," he said.

The peso hit an eight-year high of 40.25 in end-February but has sharply depreciated since then, initially due to concerns over rising inflation and more recently due to the global financial turbulence.

The local currency has now fallen more than 16 percent this year, making it among the worst performing currencies in the region alongside the South Korean won, the Indonesian rupiah and the Indian rupee.

The won has lost 36 percent so far this year while the rupiah and the rupee have dropped more than 20 percent.

In a recent commentary, investment bank UBS said policymakers in Southeast Asia--particularly in Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines--may be tempted to resort to capital controls to temper the depreciation of their local currencies. It noted that Indonesia was already moving in this direction.

UBS sees the peso ending the year weaker at 51 but rising to 48 against the dollar at the end of next year.

"If de-leveraging flows continue, policymakers may move toward less conventional measures to soften the blow on their economies as the global economy slows," UBS economist Edward Teather said. "Significant capital controls have been used before and may again be considered before this episode is over."

AP

FAKE CIGARETTES
Philippine Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales, right, shows to reporters a container full of seized counterfeit Marlboro cigarettes worth about 10 million pesos (about US$200,000) at Manila's north harbor, Philippines on Thursday Nov. 13, 2008. The seizure was done under "Project Crocodile," a monitoring and notification system of customs administrations in Asia and Pacific as part of their battle against cigarette smuggling. ***See story on Page 13.***

ADB sees no recession in RP in '09

Slowdown replaces inflation as main concern

By MICHELLE REMO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The Asian Development Bank does not see the Philippines plunging into a recession next year as some businessmen fear, but believes that an economic slowdown has become the most pressing issue that policymakers have to deal with.

Neeraj Jain, ADB country director for the Philippines, said the Philippine government's decision to abandon the goal of balancing the budget by 2010 was a welcome move given the need for pump-priming measures. Higher public spending is indeed necessary to cushion the impact of a deteriorating global economy, he said.

"It is difficult to make a precise projection [as to how much the Philippines will grow next year] but based on the current situation, we [ADB] don't think the Philippines will be in a recession," Jain said in a briefing Thursday.

Technically, recession is two consecutive quarters of year-on-year drop in economic output.

While the ADB considers projections of a recession exaggerated, Jain agreed with forecasts made by some economists from the government and the private sector that the Philippines would definitely suffer from a growth slowdown next year.

He said the problem of easing growth has taken over accelerating inflation as the biggest cause for concern. As prices of fuel drop and as increases in prices of food products ease, Jain said inflation should no longer be much of a concern for economic managers as it had been the past months.

What was more worrisome, he said, was that the financial turmoil in advanced economies would likely affect the Philippines in terms of a pullout of investments. This, in turn, could result in higher unemployment and sluggish domestic demand.

Filipino author wins Asian book prize

HONG KONG (AFP)—A novel by Filipino author Miguel Syjuco, which touches on 150 years of often turbulent Philippines history, has won a major Asian literary prize, organizers said.

Syjuco's "Ilustrado" was awarded the second annual Man Asian Literary Prize, which is open to novels from the region not yet published in English.

"Ilustrado seems to us to possess formal ambition, linguistic inventiveness and socio-political insight in the most satisfying measure," the panel of three judges said in a statement, after awarding the $10,000 prize Thursday.

"Brilliantly conceived, and stylishly executed, it covers a large and tumultuous historical period with seemingly effortless skill. It is also ceaselessly entertaining, frequently raunchy, and effervescent with humor."

The story is a fictional account of a young Filipino investigating the life of his mentor Crispin Salvador, a real-life writer and thinker, after the man's death.

It examines the disappearance of Salvador's manuscript about the corruption behind rich Filipino families.

Syjuco beat off competition from fellow Filipino Alfred A. Yuson for "The Music Child," Indian writers Kavery Nambisan for "The Story that Must Not be Told" and Siddharth Dhanvant Shanghvi for "The Lost Flamingoes of Bombay."

Chinese writer Yu Hua was also shortlisted for "Brothers."

PNB, Cash Padala ink deal to expand OFW remittance network

By ERIK DE LA CRUZ
BUSINESS MIRROR

PHILIPPINE National Bank continued to expand its remittance-service network, despite forecasts of a bleak future for the country's more than 8 million workers abroad.

PNB has announced its partnership with RD Cash Padala Inc., which operates 436 outlets of RD Pawnshop Inc. nationwide, to widen its remittance network. Under the tie-up, relatives of PNB customers abroad can now claim remittances through RD Pawnshop outlets.

The bank, controlled by business tycoon Lucio Tan, said it now has 3,351 remittance outlets nationwide, one of the widest in the industry.

According to the bank, it has the most extensive international presence among local banks with its 103 offices in 14 locations across North America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific.

Remittances, which account for around 10 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), are projected to slow in view of a global financial crisis hitting countries that host Filipino workers, popularly known as OFWs, or overseas Filipino workers, according to a World Bank report.

LABOR FRONT

The mediation session

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: What will happen if an alien worker who filed a Labor complaint does not attend a mediation session despite receiving the notification?

A: If an alien worker who is a complainant in a Labor case does not attend the mediation session after adequate notice, a Labor administrative hearing officer may deny authorization to seek temporary work pending a hearing on the matter. According to the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, if a foreign national worker does not attend the mediation session after requesting a rescheduling and does not provide the Labor Administrative Hearing Office with at least five days notice, the hearing officer may dismiss the complaint without prejudice or without finality.

■ ■ ■

Q: What will happen if an employer who is a complainant in a Labor case does not attend the mediation session?

A: According to the Regulations, if a complaining employer does not attend the mediation session after adequate notice, a Labor hearing officer may dismiss the complaint without prejudice or without finality.

If the complaint is not resolved at mediation, the Labor Director may file a motion to dismiss if the complaint has not been timely filed or is otherwise deficient on its face.

If the complaint is timely filed, the hearing officer shall set a hearing date and inform both parties of the date.

■ ■ ■

Q: What will happen if the mediation is successful?

A: If the mediation is successful, the Regulations state that the mediator shall reduce the agreement to writing and the agreement shall be signed by both parties within three days after the mediation session. If the alien worker is represented by a lawyer or a professional assistance, any mediator may approve the settlement agreement. If the working is unrepresented, a Labor hearing officer must approve the settlement agreement.

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Death penalty for OFW in Jeddah rampage?

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—The Filipino worker who allegedly went on a car rampage in Jeddah Tuesday could face the death penalty, an official of a Filipino expatriates group said.

"Failure to prove his insanity will lead him to beheading," Ronnie Abeto of the Pusong Mamon Task Force said in a text message.

This as the Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed that 33-year-old Rigor de Padua of Muntinlupa City "figured in a series of incidents in the early morning of 11 November in Jeddah highway that resulted in the death of three Saudi nationals and injuries to two others."

Citing reports from Philippine consul general in Jeddah Ezzedin Tago, acting Foreign Affairs Secretary Esteban Conejos said De Padua is now in the custody of Saudi police.

But Conejos said he could not say what penalty the Saudi court would impose on De Padua.

"We do not know yet," he said in an exchange of text messages.

Conejos said he instructed Tago "to see to it that full consular assistance is provided to De Padua, that his rights are respected and protected throughout the process to establish the facts of the case and to determine his culpability, if any."

When asked if De Padua indeed ran amuck, DFA spokesman Claro Cristobal said, "That's a detail still to be determined."

According to news reports, De Padua went berserk after receiving a call from his girlfriend who told him she was leaving him. He allegedly commandeered a bus and ran around the city and slammed into at least four vehicles, killing three persons and injuring dozens.

Arroyo appeals for 3 death row OFWs

NEW YORK, Philippines—President Macapagal-Arroyo met Saudi Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud on Wednesday in a bid to stay the execution of three Filipinos convicted of killing fellow Filipinos in Jeddah.

Arroyo met with Sultan on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly on interfaith dialogue in New York and relayed her wish of clemency for Rolando Gonzalez, his brother Edison, and Eduardo Arcilla.

"She went for it. She was there to see to it that the two Filipinos convicted will hopefully get some kind of reprieve or some lighter penalties," Press Secretary Jesus Dureza told reporters.

The Crown Prince vowed to look into the cases, he said.

Last year, a court sentenced the three to death by beheading for the killings of Reno Lumbang, Jeremias Bucod and Dante Rivero in April 2006.

Saudi Arabia's Court of Appeals affirmed the sentence on September 15.

The appellate court also affirmed the conviction of Victoriano Alfonso, Efren Francisco Dumaun, Omar Basilio, and Joel Sinamban to eight years in prison for covering up the crime. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

Bolante: Arroyo did not steal agri funds to finance 2004 campaign

By OLIVER TEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A former Philippine agriculture official testified Thursday that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was never involved with a government fund worth millions of pesos (dollars) that she is accused of dipping into to finance her 2004 election campaign.

Arroyo and other government officials are accused of siphoning off money from a 728 million pesos ($13 million) fund purportedly created to purchase fertilizer for farmers. She has denied any wrongdoing.

The allegations are part of an impeachment complaint against Arroyo filed by opposition lawmakers in the House of Representatives last month. The House hasn't acted on the complaint.

Testifying at a Senate hearing, former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante said the fertilizer fund was part of the regular budget and therefore did not need Arroyo's approval to be disbursed.

A preliminary report by two Senate committees said there were indications the fund was only set up to "suit (an) electoral purpose" and was never actually intended to buy fertilizer.

The report said Bolante was the "architect" of the program.

Opposition Senator Manuel Roxas III called Bolante's testimony "lies."

"We all know that nothing moves in this government without the knowledge of the highest official of the land," he said.

Arroyo, who was swept to power in 2001 after President Joseph Estrada was ousted by a nonviolent "people power" revolt, has survived four attempted power grabs and three earlier impeachment bids that included allegations she cheated in the 2004 elections.

AP

Former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante reacts as senators ask him questions during the blue ribbon committee hearing on the US$15 million fertilizer fund scam Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008 at the Philippine Senate in suburban Pasay City, south of Manila.

House threatens Bolante's arrest

By LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Lawmakers at the House of Representatives have warned former agriculture secretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante not to snub their next hearing on the fertilizer fund scam or face possible arrest.

Palawan Representative Abraham Kahlil Mitra, chairman of the agriculture committee, said they would resume the hearing on Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

"It's all systems go for our hearing on Tuesday. Bolante, better not snub us this time because our leniency might give way to the exercise of our powers to compel his attendance," Mitra said in a text message.

Bolante was a no-show during the first hearing of the committee Wednesday, saying he was still under the custody of the Senate, which had ordered his arrest prior to a marathon hearing Thursday.

Majority Floor Leader Arthur Defensor said that because he had testified in the Senate, Bolante would be free to attend the House hearing.

He said the House panel might also formally inform the Senate about their invitation to the former agriculture official to the House hearing next week.

Mitra said congressmen would be "more resourceful" in dealing with Bolante when he faces the inquiry.

"Congressmen will be more resourceful,... and we might have additional documents for him to confirm," he said.

Bolante has named three House members as those who sought part of the fertilizer fund. The solons, however, said they did not get fertilizer but shredders.

At least 105 congressmen are in the list of the Department of Agriculture as among those who have received the money.

Mitra said the hearng "would give congressmen mentioned in the alleged list of recipients to confirm or deny their district's acceptance of the fertilizers."

"For those whose names were in the list but got nothing this will be the perfect time to confront its alleged author. This face-off will bring out truth and clear the air," Mitra said.

Bolante has been tagged as the alleged mastermind in the transfer of P728 million in fertilizer funds to the campaign kitty of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 elections.

In Thursday's Senate hearing, Bolante denied that there was a scam and cleared the President of involvement.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

Fake cigarettes worth $204K seized

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine customs authorities have seized a container loaded with counterfeit cigarettes from China with a street value of 10 million pesos ($204,000). Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said Thursday the Marlboro-branded cigarettes arrived Nov. 2 from China. The raid followed a tip from the intelligence liaison office of the World Customs Organization. He says they were marked "Made in the Philippines" and declared as household wares.

No arrests were made. The Philippine Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service and Philip Morris International confirmed they were counterfeit. The seizure is part of a global crackdown that has netted more than 274 million counterfeit cigarettes since 2005.

Arroyo back from US trip

MANILA, Philippines—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo arrived back in the country before dawn Friday from the United States, where she spoke before the United Nations General Assembly on the importance of interfaith dialogue in resolving conflicts. The Philippine Airlines flight carrying the President and her delegation touched down at the Centennial Terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at around 3 a.m. Arroyo is expected in Lanao del Norte province later Friday, where she will visit the Macapagal-Macaraeg ancestral house in Iligan City, and distribute grocery items, medicine, and corn seeds as well as inspect a P10-million farm-to-market road project in Nunungan town, Press Secretary Jesus Dureza, said in a news conference upon the President's arrival, which was aired on radio. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

2 NPA rebels captured in Monkayo raid

DAVAO CITY, Philippines—Two suspected communist rebels were captured during a raid by government troops in a remote village of Monkayo in Compostela Valley Thursday, a military spokesperson said. Major Randolph Cabangbang, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said elements of the Army's Special Forces, who were searching for a missing junior officer, stumbled on a New People's Army encampment in the village of CaSoon around 4:30 a.m. Cabangbang said troops seized from the suspected rebels medical supplies, documents and personal belongings. He did not identify the suspected rebels. The military has been combing the hinterlands of Compostela Valley following a series of clashes with NPA rebels. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Trade union leader nabbed in Laguna

SAN PEDRO, Laguna, Philippines—A labor leader was arrested in Laguna Thursday noon in front of the Calamba City hall, a labor group reported. Herme Marasigan of the Organized Labor Association in Line Industries and Agriculture (Olalia) Federation identified the labor leader as Emmanuel Dionida, 40, executive director of the Labor Education Advocacy Development Response Services (Leaders), an institution working for labor rights. He was arrested with his girlfriend Sailani Catindig around 12:30 p.m., Marasigan said. According to him, the last contact with Dionida was at around 10 a.m., before joint forces from the Calamba City police and the regional intelligence arrested the two. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Tonyo heads for Eastern Mindanao--PAGASA

MANILA, Philippines—Tropical depression "Tonyo" continues to move towards Eastern Mindanao, prompting the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration to raise signal no. 1 over the affected provinces. Tonyo was spotted at 70 kilometers west of Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur, packing maximum sustained winds of 45 kilometers per hour near the center, PAGASA said. Signal no. 1 has been raised over Surigao del Norte, Dinagat Island, Siargao Island, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Misamis Oriental, Camiguin Island, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Bukidnon, North Cotabato, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat, and South Cotabato. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Kidnap of Filipino-Chinese trader foiled

COTABATO CITY—A combined team of policemen and soldiers foiled a kidnapping attempt on a Filipino-Chinese trader in Upi, Shariff Kabunsuan Thursday night, police said Friday. Senior Insp. Martin Aquino, Upi police chief, identified the businessman as Wilfredo "Bachang" Chio, 50. Aquino said Chio and his wife were heading back home from Cotabato City when about six gunmen flagged down their vehicle in Barangay Mirab at 6 p.m. At gun-point, he was dragged out of the vehicle and brought to the interior portion of Barangay Mirab, leaving behind his wife in the car, Aquino said. But responding policemen and members of the 6th Infantry Battalion figured in a firefight with the suspects, forcing the kidnappers to abandon Chio, Aquino said. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Teasing out truth in fertilizer scam: Patience on trial

By BUTCH FERNANDEZ
BUSINESS MIRROR

After more than two years, Senate probers finally had the chance to grill the man described by a Senate committee report as the only one who could fill in the puzzle in the P728-million fertilizer scam, but came nowhere near to finding vital pieces as former agriculture undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante made claims that they found incredible for the most part.

They particularly doubted his blanket claim that President Arroyo had no knowledge of the release of such a huge fund; and his insistence that it was a continuing agriculture program not limited to fertilizer, and thus not tied to the 2004 elections where it is believed by many to have been used.

Taking turns grilling Bolante at Thursday's hearing of the blue-ribbon committee, senators also voiced skepticism over Bolante's attempt to distance himself from a favored contractor that supplied the bulk of the allegedly overpriced fertilizer for ornamental plants; and his efforts to put the blame solely on local implementers and beneficiaries of the project.

Citing the findings in a 2006 Senate committee report that affirmed his involvement in the anomalous transaction, Bolante griped that the lawmakers had already accused him of violating the antigraft and plunder laws and "of being the brains and implementor of the P728-million fertilizer scam," which he repeatedly denied in his marathon testimony.

"Because of these accusations, my lawyers have advised me that in the eyes of the Senate, I stand as an accused and not as a witness and, therefore, any questions relative to the alleged scam may be covered by the rule against self incrimination. Despite this, I have chosen to speak, that is why I am here with you today, with full confidence that the Senate of the 14th Congress shall adhere to its constitutional mandate to conduct this inquiry strictly in aid of legislation and in observance of my constitutional rights," Bolante told the senators in his opening statement.

AP

A protester holding his son shouts slogans as they stage a picket outside the Philippine Senate during the blue ribbon committee hearing on the US$15 million fertilizer fund scam Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008 in suburban Pasay City, south of Manila.

But when asked pointblank by Sen. Mar Roxas to recall the specific date when Mrs. Arroyo approved the disbursement of the P728-million fertilizer funds released sometime before the 2004 presidential elections, Bolante immediately exculpated the President, raising the eyebrows of his Senate interrogators.

"President Arroyo has never been involved and is not involved in this particular project of the Department of Agriculture; the project that you are referring to, the P728-million fund for farm input and farm implement fund was approved and processed by [the] Department of Budget and Management and did not require the approval of President Arroyo," Bolante claimed.

Roxas said he would have understood if Bolante said that Arroyo has no role in any anomaly, but for him to say she was completely clueless about such a major project and massive fund release was incredible, as Mrs. Arroyo is known to be a micro manager. "GMA is known as a micro manager who meddles in small details in running [the] government; and to say that she did not approve this is hard to accept," Roxas said in Filipino.

In the joint committee report on the fertilizer-scam inquiry submitted on March 1, 2006 by Sens. Joker Arroyo and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Senate probers found "strong probable criminal culpability," and recommended the filing of criminal and administrative charges against Bolante and other DA officials. They included former Secretary Luis Lorenzo, Undersecretaries Ibarra Poliquit and Belinda Gonzales, Assistant Secretary Jose Montes and all regional directors of the department "who participated in the illegal transactions or dissipation of the P728-million fertilizer-fund scam."

Under questioning by Sen. Francis Escudero at Thursday's hearing, Bolante admitted that the list of supposed beneficiaries, including congressmen, governors and mayors, was "prepared by my office, which was tasked by the Department of Agriculture to put together all pending requests for funding coming from different local government units."

Asked about the overpriced fertilizer supply distributed to the beneficiaries, Bolante told senators that "the project implementors should be able to explain that, we have nothing to do with the procurement."

"We released it to the LGU, to the chosen implementing party of the projects of the congressmen and governors; for example, let us say in the province of Pampanga, we did not release it to the governor, we released it to the provincial government of Pampanga.

After the marathon proceedings, Senate probers, however, remained unconvinced that Bolante had nothing to do with what their earlier inquiry established, based on testimonies that there are clear indications of "massive misappropriation, diversion of funds, malversation of public funds and raids of the farmers' money."

Sen. Loren Legarda called the scam a "triple whammy" against taxpayers: the fertilizers used were the wrong kind; they were overpriced; and the names of many supposed beneficiaries were misused because they did not get the funds listed.

The scam was first exposed in 2004 by Makati City Rep. Teddyboy Locsin Jr., who complained on the floor of the House of Representatives that he and Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar were listed as recipients of P3 million each from the program, even though they never asked for and received such fund.

At the start of the proceedings on Thursday, administration Sen. Miguel Zubiri announced he was inhibiting himself from the hearing even as he confirmed receiving an offer of P5 million worth of fertilizer funds that he did not accept. "I did not touch the fertilizer fund," he said, but admitted that the budget department released an equivalent amount for a road project in his district when he was still congressman of Bukidnon in 2004.

Senators later agreed to allow Bolante to go home but opted to keep him in Senate custody assigning round-the-clock guards with an assurance from Bolante that he would come back at the next hearing.

Meanwhile, the United Opposition (UNO) was not surprised that Bolante "opted to protect President Arroyo rather than tell the truth" about the P728-million scandal.

"We never entertained the illusion that Joc-Joc Bolante would squeal on his benefactors in this fertilizer fund scam," Makati Mayor and UNO President Jejomar Binay said in a statement. "So there is really nothing to be disappointed about in his Senate testimony."

He echoed the observation of most senators that "it was hard to believe that a mere undersecretary was able to move close to P1 billion in a period of one day without the behest of influential people in Malacañang."

For his part, UNO spokesperson Adel Tamano said that Bolante was playing a "not so-funny joke" on the Filipino people when he testified that President Arroyo knew nothing about the release of the fertilizer funds.

Binay said the Senate must now set in place safeguards that will ensure that no government money and resources will again be used to support the campaign of President Arroyo's candidate in the 2010 elections. "This culture of fraud and corruption must end with this administration."

$$$ PERSONAL FINANCE

Wean your child from 'buy me' mentality

Editor's Note: This is a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: My two kids are in grade school in an exclusive school. We've always been a simple family. However, lately, my 9-year old daughter has been asking us for a PSP like what her classmate has. My son at 12 wants a laptop of his own—the small cute one out in the market—and a skateboard. We don't want to give in because these things are not really priorities for us. How can we handle this, and how can kids their age be kept away from the "bilmoko" [buy me] syndrome.—Maita G.

Answer: Maita, thank you for raising a problem that most parents face, and will likely confront more and more this holiday season.

Children are easily swayed by the power of suggestion. Advertisers know this, which is why so many TV commercials are designed to appeal to kids. The end result? Parents hearing Bilmoko which means "bili mo ako" or Buy me this, buy me that. How many of us have been asked by our kids to buy a certain brand of biscuit, toothpaste or juice just because they saw it on TV?

This is true in the school environment too. When kids see their classmates bringing the latest toys and gadgets, they want the same things for themselves. Parents are often torn between granting the kids' wishes because they love them and not granting their kids' wishes because they love them too.

You're right in saying that the things your kids are asking for are not priorities. They are not needs; they are wants. Your kids won't be at a great disadvantage if they don't have those things at the moment. But at this time your kids do not know these.

The first thing then to do is to explain the difference between a need and a want. A need is something essential for living. It includes food, clothing, education, and transportation—the basics. A want is anything aside from that which a person can live without for the moment. Examples of wants include toys, gadgets, jewelry, and even a trip to Disneyland.

For adults, needs include the same things but may also include house rent or mortgage. Wants may include such things as cosmetics, luxury bags, golf carts, cable TV subscriptions, high-tech cellphones, and plasma TV.

If you take the time to teach your kids now the difference between a want and a need, they will grow up being more discerning in making purchases and prioritizing their needs. This will lead to their being financially responsible.

To avoid the bilmoko syndrome, resist the urge to buy whatever your children request just because they want them. Explain to your children that your family will have to prioritize needs first before wants because that's what is right. Teach your children that what is more important is for them to be healthy, strong, good and kind; less important is what they have. What's important is who they are, not what they have. In fact, tell them that the friends who love them for who they are rather than what they have are their real friends. This is true even for adults.

Now it's not really bad to buy your children wants or extra things, especially if they have earned these as a reward or if these can be beneficial to the whole family. But before deciding what to buy, assess first if your family can afford them. If not, look for an alternative reward that may cost a lot cheaper and be even better.

For instance, if your daughter has made it to the honor roll, you might want to offer her a trip with you to a gaming arcade where you can both bond and play together. The extra time you spend bonding with her may be worth more than the cost of a PSP.

Since your son wants a laptop for his own, suggest buying a family computer for everyone to use. This may be good so he can do his research on the Internet there, while at the same time allowing you and the rest of the family to use the computer for word processing, e-mailing, etc. There are many offers now in the market for a zero percent installment scheme via credit cards. Look into these offers to see which one suits your family and budget best.

Also, determine if this is the right time to give kids their wants. Delayed gratification is a good tool to help them aim for something and do their best to reach that goal. It will also teach children patience and diligence. Best of all, it's the best way to make sure your kids don't grow up being spoiled.

The media and the kids' environment will always have something for your kids to want and long for. Take time to teach your children what really matters.

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Sam Milby shines on a rainy day

By OLIVER PULUMBARIT
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Actor-model-singer Sam Milby is the new endorser of i2i eyewear.

Three years after Sam Milby left the "Pinoy Big Brother" house, the actor-model-singer still sizzles, enjoying fame and fortune long after the proverbial 15 minutes.

Samuel Lloyd Milby grew up in Ohio and never expected to make it big in Philippine show business. But make it big, he did. He continues to adorn ads of all forms and sizes, act in teleseryes and star in rom-com movies. The 24-year-old's future in his profitable career is so bright that, as the old cliché goes, he's got to wear shades.

Well, he does. Sam is the new endorser of i2i eyewear, and i2i's stylish and trendsetting co-owner Tina Ocampo is very pleased with the brand's newest face.

"I think he's the perfect choice," she said. "During the shoot, he was very patient, very professional. He was even very appreciative of having the food served to him and his staff. He really is a very kind man who's appreciative of the littlest things. I've been listening to all his interviews. As an endorser, he grasps the whole idea of the product, which is essential."

It was a rainy afternoon launch, but Sam spoke candidly to *Philippine Daily Inquirer*—in Taglish—about eyewear, controversy and his life a few years after 49 days in "PBB," among other things.

How do you feel about being the next endorser of i2i?

It's a huge blessing because 'yung mga dating endorsers sina Donita Rose, Jericho Rosales, Piolo Pascual. So to be in that line, I think it's a big blessing.

Maganda, stylish and affordable ang i2i. Maraming choices, malaki ang range nila. They're very updated sa mga styles.

How is modeling eyewear different and what makes you perfect for it?

They said my features are balanced and not too overpowering. The photos really focus on the face, of course, and Tina said my face is not too simple, but my features are not too strong. So there's a good balance.

Do you still talk to your old "Pinoy Big Brother" housemates?

Minsan. When they had a celebration, the anniversary, pero may trabaho. Out of lahat ng mga housemates, I'm closest to Say [Alonzo].

You've mentioned that you never expected this kind of success. What are you learning about show biz and being a celebrity?

Well, the job isn't as easy as a lot of people portray it to be. When I think about it now, I feel myself more blessed, kasi ang daming nasa show biz na they've been in it for how many years. Normally, you earn your way up. Pero ako, it was given to me just like that. I feel like I have a lot to learn. I just want to show improvement.

Before "PBB," I was never an actor. I wasn't even a singer, really, so I just don't wanna stop learning. I don't think I'll ever stop learning. Ito ang trabahong gusto kong gawin talaga.

Which among those things do you prefer doing?

I love singing. It's my first passion talaga. I play guitar. I miss jamming. One thing I love about music is jamming with a full band, pero wala akong banda ngayon. I have stage fright, though.

But I love acting, I love singing. I don't see myself doing anything else, really.

You lived abroad, and are only learning Tagalog now...

I was born and raised in the States. Tagalog, mahirap talaga. 'Yung start ng learning ko sa Tagalog, sa "PBB." So mga three years na.

Did you ever hesitate about pursuing a career in show biz?

Wala akong times na ganyan. May mga panahon na parang gusto kong magpahinga. Gusto kong matulog, gusto kong magbakasyon. Kasi, dire-diretso trabaho ko. Minsan uuwi ako sa bahay para maligo lang, tapos alis agad. Dati talagang mas grabe 'yung schedule ko. Ngayon, may mga times na may rest. Minsan nahihirapan ako matulog sa gabi. Bakasyon, that's one thing I really want.

Where would you spend it?

Earlier this year, nagbakasyon ako. First time, actually, I went on vacation. I went to Thailand. Filipinos there recognized me. I wanted two weeks. I got four days. Nasa beach kami, tapos umulan. Traveling is one thing I love about the job. We're doing a tour of Europe this month. I love traveling talaga, and seeing different cultures.

Name some show-biz friends you're learning from.

We have a small group, actually, that really helps me out. Every Sunday, pagkatapos ng "ASAP." We're Christians. They help you out and they pray for you if you're having a problem.

Friends in my small group: Christian Bautista, Erik Santos, Piolo, Richard Poon. I do get to hang out with Gab Valenciano, son of Gary V., sometimes. He has a bike and I ride it. Sarap talaga. He's the reason I bought a motor bike. Anne [Curtis] rode at the back when we went to Pampanga, one time.

Is Anne your girlfriend, and are you still "exclusively dating"?

Hindi. We're not together. We're not together. We're known as a love team din, but, I mean... we work together in "Dyosa." And we worked together in "Maging Sino Ka Man."

Do you and your friends share acting or singing tips when you hang out?

They don't really talk about show biz too much. It's more about helping each other grow as Christians. But they do give me advice. Especially Piolo, he's a very great actor: "Your face is too distorted when you cry. You need to ano..." Mga ganyan.

Speaking of Piolo, you both decided to drop the libel suit against Lolit Solis. When you filed it, did you consider that you may be alienating gay fans, and that your strong denial might be construed as "being gay is wrong"?

Hindi. I wasn't thinking that. It's nothing against homosexuality at all. It's more about writing something that was completely false. There was no truth to it at all. When you write something like that and you use the names, that's what people believe. It's nothing about being against homosexuality. It's more about just having the truth come out because people are thinking the wrong thing.

So officially, what is your stance on gay people?

Well, I do work with them. When I was skating, my figure-skating coach was even gay. So I have no problem with it at all. I have friends that are.

Describe your fitness regimen.

I really don't have time to go to the gym now. Dati, I used to go once a week at least. I'm very busy. Before, I was very strict with my diet. No beef, no pork, I barely eat any sweets. No rice, no pasta. But chicken, fish and vegetables, I'd really eat them. I drink a lot of hot tea.

Right now, when I wake up, I try to do a set of 75 push-ups straight and right after that, 20 seconds later, I do sit-ups. I do 30 or 40 crunches, and I then do leg raises. It takes about five to six minutes. I always listen to music.

Were you always fit?

I was very fit. When I was skating, I had four-percent body fat, which was very, very lean. I was about 14 or 15. And then when I started high school, I gained a lot of weight 'cause nagtrabaho ako sa fast-food restaurant. I gained mga 30 pounds. I ate everything, the fries, the burgers, ang sarap! Discounted kasi.

I did wrestling in high school. I was 152 lbs. I was in that weight class. The next year, I was 170. If you see pictures of me, my face was really big. I lost the excess weight when I dieted.

Would you get naked in a movie now if the role calls for it?

I'm a naturally shy person. But at the same time, some roles require some things. It really depends on what the role calls for. If that's required, we'll see. I want to mature as an actor.

How comfortable are you playing theprosthetics-heavy character in "Dyosa"?

I like the character. Maraming nagsasabi, "Bakit masama ka?" But you'll see a lot of changes. I think the character will be redeemed eventually. Hindi ko alam how, but you'll see.

The prosthetics, they take one hour to put on. I'm not too fond of them anymore.

In "My Big Love," I had full-face prosthetics. Noong mga last days, I cringed. "I don't like it anymore..." I'm a very patient person, but I'm not too fond of it. Mas lalo na kapag mainit. Mabilis talaga ako pawisan.

What do you want to be known for, eventually?

With acting, I wanna be known as versatile. I'm still a beginner. Sina John Lloyd [Cruz], Piolo, lahat sila, they've been acting ilang years na. I just want people to see improvement in my acting.

Sa indie film, it's action and suspense, so I'm excited. I think my acting's improved in "Cul de Sac." What I like about it is that is it's a good break from romantic movies. And I like the story.

How are you able to use your celebrity in supporting causes or charities?

Sometimes, we have charity concerts. But right now, I've been given a chance to be Department of Education's youth spokesperson and role model. There are assemblies where they need encouragement to study, and to be against drugs and violence.

My first assembly was a couple of weeks ago, sa Baguio. Lahat ng mga youth leaders, the best students sa buong bansa, they were there. I was required to speak. And I performed din, syempre.

Luis excited to work with mom Vilma

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Luis Manzano is more excited than nervous to work with his mom Vilma Santos in her forthcoming movie with John Lloyd Cruz.

"I have no apprehensions," says Luis. "I'm a bit anxious yet ecstatic about the project, where I get to act side by side with my loving mom and the Vilma Santos."

How is he preparing for his gay role? "I observe the gay people I work with. I study their nuances. It's amusing. I learn something unusual each day. I'm not homophobic at all."

Luis' many charms work well. Gender bender and blender!

A breakup that everyone saw coming

Everyone saw the Dingdong Dantes-Karylle split-up coming. As a friend, I respected their silence when they needed it most.

I've seen them in their unguarded moments. They were good for each other because they have the same sensibilities.

I'll never forget the time Karylle helped me bug Dong to e-mail me his answers for a full feature about him. As she placed in the caption of our pic together: The interviewer, the interviewee and the kuliter.

This time, I wish I could be the kuliter. I would bug Cupid to bring them back together. I remember Dong's advice to me when I poured my heart out to him about my (in)significant other: Dapat masaya ka whether magkasama kayo o hindi. Or else you better confront him. But we guys don't like mahabang usapan. Gusto namin straight to the point na.

The mahabang usapan between K and Dong is now over. He insists that it's their change of priorities that led to their breakup. If Marian Rivera is not the cause, then could she be the after-effect of Dong and K's separation?

Working double-time

Rufa Mae Quinto's foreigner BF Bobby Lopez split up with her via e-mail. "But he's trying to woo me back again," reveals Pchi. "Long-distance romance kaya mahirap. I'm not closing my doors, though. For now, I'm busy building my dream house so I have to work double-time. Bahala na si Papa Jesus to lead me to the right Papa."

Working hard, playing harder to get.

New love

Aiko Melendez's ex-hubby Martin Jickain has found a new love in a charming Fil-Am girl named Carmina, who comes from a prominent clan in Pangasinan. "It looks serious because Martin has met her family," said my source. "And she has met his daughter with Aiko, Martina. They are classmates in culinary school." Have they found the recipe for a lasting romance?

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Hungry people

Hunger—and not a financial one—is the real crisis affecting the Philippine economy, Mahar Mangahas wrote in a recent *Philippine Daily Inquirer* column. In the third quarter of this year, he noted, the number of households suffering from hunger was about 3.3 million, or 18.4 percent of the national total of 18.1 million households. Of this number, 2.7 million said they endured hunger once or a few times over the previous three months, while 600,000 said they went hungry often or always. The reality, however, may even be worse. Mangahas acknowledged that the SWS surveys did not capture the homeless and those displaced by war or natural calamities. In other words, the number of hungry may have been under-reported.

The situation is actually much worse, according to Gallup International. The Zurich-based polling firm said that in its survey conducted from June to September this year, 40 percent of Filipinos admitted that they had "little or no food at all" in the past year. That makes two out of every five Filipinos going hungry. And with that dismal finding the Philippines was ranked as the fifth hungriest nation among 55 countries covered by the 2008 World Food Survey. Only Cameroon, Pakistan, Nigeria and Peru fared worse.

When already derided as the laggard among Southeast Asian economies, the last thing the Philippines needed was to be cast among the hungriest in the world. But there it is, another black mark added to an already badly tarnished international reputation for the country.

This year, in fact, the very poor ratings in various fields have come one after the other. For instance, there was the very low ranking of 139 (among 173 countries), down from 128, given to the Philippines by Reporters Without Borders in the Annual Worldwide Freedom Index. Earlier, Transparency International put the Philippines in 141st place, down from 131st last year, among 180 countries in its Corruption Perception Index. To all this, the standard retort of the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was that the rankings merely reflected perceptions, not the realities. And that was all the response those damaging findings got from an administration that seems to believe rationalizations can be substituted for real reforms.

The publication of the results of recent hunger surveys apparently got scant attention from an administration that was focused on stage-managing two scandals: the old fertilizer scam that was resurrected with the deportation from the United States of its architect, Jocelyn Bolante, and the more recent revelations about police generals carrying more euros than they were legally allowed to a conference in Russia.

But to ignore the surveys is to play with fire. Obviously some programs need to be retooled and more resources need to be committed to this effort. But that is only for the short term. For the long term, the government will have to find ways of helping industry create jobs and preparing people to fill them through education and training. And drastic and sweeping reforms have to be made to improve governance.

It is not merely coincidence that the hungriest nations of the world are also among the most corrupt. But then stamping out corruption or even just moderating the greed of people in positions of power is probably the last thing one can hope for under the present administration. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

Whitewashed

There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

W. Scott Thompson had a most interesting piece last Saturday on this page ("America's gain, Philippines' loss?") "Why is the Philippines absent in the excitement over the election of America's 44th president?"

One answer to this, Thompson suggests, is that the McCains have close ties with the Philippines and with Filipinos. John McCain's father was based in the Philippines and later commanded the 7th Fleet. Marcos' executive secretary, Alex Melchor, received McCain and his wife in Thompson's house in Washington.

But, and here's the really interesting part: "There's another less worthy explanation, and it's to be found in any convenience store: 'whitening' lotion. A close friend of mine here in Manila put it simply in championing Hillary Clinton before Obama demolished her: 'because he's black.' This is unworthy of any serious person. Throughout the rest of the world Obama has stirred deep feelings. Maybe America is back, a 'light on the hill' as it once was. If the whole world had voted, Obama would have won even more overwhelmingly."

The last is gospel truth. I kept a close eye on the US elections, being glued to CNN and BBC for the past couple of months, and their reports about the world's reaction to the election bore it out. The world was as riveted to the US election as Americans were, grasping instinctively that their significance lay well beyond whether a Democrat or Republican would reside in the White House in the next four years, or even whether America was prepared to repudiate George W. Bush or not. It lay in whether change had finally come to America or not. As in fact it had, as Obama would proclaim afterward. Obama was the prohibitive favorite the world over, and not just in Kenya, Barack's father's land of birth. Obama fever swept across the world.

Except the Philippines.

Well, we've always been the odd-man out not just in Asia but in the world. But here's the case where the oddness isn't quaint but vicious. This is dysfunctionality of epic proportions.

I myself was astonished to hear that many Filipinos here and in the United States actually favored McCain. I should have known better. The reason for that is in part political. This country is more conservative, or rightist, about America than Americans. I saw a great deal of that in the aftermath of 9/11, when compatriots vowed death to America's enemies. Hell, in a survey of public figures three or four years ago, while pretty nearly all local officials were held in contempt by the public, Bush was held in the highest esteem by it.

But it's even worse than political conservatism, or fascism. It's racism. We are one of the most racist people in the world.

I've seen that among Filipino communities in the United States. Some try to dissimulate the bigotry, complaining of their black neighbors as being disruptive, as being prone to violence, as having little education. The last is the most often cited, Filipino expatriates particularly in the United States taking pride in their college degrees, which they take blacks to universally not possess.

Others do not bother to hide it at all. Someone put it to me rather curiously, which I haven't forgotten to this day. He made it a point to dress nattily to go to his blue-collar work. A daily ritual that included shaving closely and slapping on cologne. When I asked him why he did this when his American friends did not, he said, "Me kulay ka na nga, hindi ka pa magpopostura." That's not so easy to translate, (very) roughly: "When you're dark-skinned, you've got to make up for it in some way."

Weirdly enough, in the reckoning of many Filipinos abroad, particularly in the United States, they are higher in the pecking order of color by having fairer skins than blacks. Even more weirdly enough, in their reckoning, the more they internalize and project the deep-seated biases of the white community against blacks, the more they become acceptable in the eyes of that community. When in fact they merely make assholes of themselves.

No, I'm not surprised at all to hear Thompson say that a close Filipino friend of his preferred Hillary Clinton because Obama is black. The guy at least has the virtue of being honest about his stupidity.

It's execrable behavior and is truly unworthy of any serious person. Which makes you wonder how many serious persons reside in this country. For the affliction isn't just local, it's national. The sentiment in fact is unworthy of any serious nation, which makes you wonder if we are a serious nation at all.

I've always said that we Filipinos start being racist not just when we go abroad but even while we languish here like prisoners dreaming of escape. Nothing shows that more than whitening lotion, which Thompson rightly points to. That has got to be one of the most mind-boggling things for foreigners who come here to get a tan. It speaks volumes about the mentality of the colonized. If you are dark-skinned in this country, you are reduced either to an object of ridicule or to comic relief. Spanish and American rule may have physically gone, but not so their psychological residue. To this day, I cannot forget what the mother of a Filipino contestant to a world beauty contest said, which was that she couldn't understand how the judges could prefer a "negra" to her daughter who was a mestiza.

Even now we suffer the fate of a people who have been whitewashed. By seeing only what is light, we are constantly kept in the dark.

A personal introduction

Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Thrice colonized and with an archipelagic landscape, the Philippines is a young nation constantly in search of self. History is central to this search for identity and thus the teaching of history in schools is both informative (as an academic discipline that studies the past) and formative (when the past is utilized to place the student in the context of the nation—its past, present and future). Thus, the structure and presentation of history in textbooks, classrooms, official holidays and commemorations, street names and monuments, while seemingly innocent, become contested territory when history as a social science or an academic discipline becomes a handmaid to citizenship, nation building and nationalism.

It is the beginning of yet another semester, and I will enter a classroom and have 80 pairs of eyes following me around, 80 pairs of ears that I presume are listening to every word that proceeds from my lips. I have been teaching since 1985, but I still feel stage fright at the beginning of every term.

The first day is crucial. While many teachers are content with meeting the class, distributing the syllabus and explaining course requirements, I give a full lecture using all the tricks I have learned over the years. Students will remember your first day. If you do well, that first impression will be carried till the end of the term. If you don't make an impression, you are doomed for the whole term. You can never catch up, you can never make up.

While I have always been interested in history, I did not foresee my future as an academic and didn't really prepare for my future (my undergraduate thesis was actually on "Food in Kapampangan Culture"). The turning point in my life came when I met two senior members of the National Historical Institute: the late E. Aguilar Cruz (journalist, writer, painter, wonderful raconteur who served as permanent Philippine representative to Unesco in Paris—all this without having finished college) and the late Teodoro A. Agoncillo (nationalist historian, opinionated raconteur, academic who built a distinguished and colorful career likewise without a PhD). Agoncillo got me interested in research, Cruz opened doors to a career in journalism where I specialized in history.

I began writing in 1985, the tail-end of the Marcos period, in the pro-Marcos Daily Express. In those days of strict censorship, history was considered a "safe" subject and I was allowed to write anything I wished. Then, as now, sensitive readers noticed that I actually commented on the present using the past.

From the beginning, I have always been suspicious of textbook or official history, often asking questions or exploring other possibilities in something that has come down to us over the years as truth. Writing for the general reader also made me write without jargon, in a clear and simple way which is frowned upon by some constipated academics. To engage readers uninterested or hostile to history because of their traumatic experience with the subject in school, I would often write about the lives and times of men and women canonized as heroes to free them from their monuments of stone and bronze and make them human again. My light and often mischievous slant can also be credited to my having started my career in the same room as the infamous show-biz columnist Ricky Lo.

I wrote feature articles on history and eventually wrote a column that appeared in the Lifestyle/Entertainment page of the now defunct Daily Globe. Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc suggested that I move to the Inquirer or at least have my column moved from Lifestyle to the Opinion-Editorial page. I didn't realize it then, but I often wrote serious stuff but these were not taken seriously because the column appeared next to a photograph of Dolphy or a starlet in half a dress. I moved to the Inquirer in 1993 and now provide foil in a spread where columns comment mainly on politics and current social issues.

Professional and academic historians did not look kindly on popularization. While much of my writing is culled from primary sources, the style and form are not academic. Critics unfairly demand that my column utilize footnotes, have a clear theoretical framework, and should be written in the deadly prose better suited to academic journals. Partly as a result of this aggravation, I pursued (and still pursue) a PhD to get my license to practice history. Often addressed as "Doctor," I have always been tempted to have calling cards made with the letters "HpD" after my name instead of "PhD" to signify "Hindi pa doctor" (Not yet a doctor).

While I am an associate professor in the history department of the Ateneo de Manila University, it is journalism that provided me with a public voice that led to books, lectures, consultancies, and eventually my appointment as chairman of the National Historical Institute in 2002. It was then that I realized one of the great ironies of my life: I built a reputation as an iconoclast, my articles often challenged textbook or official history but with the stroke of a president's pen, I suddenly found myself the keeper of that same official history I had previously challenged.

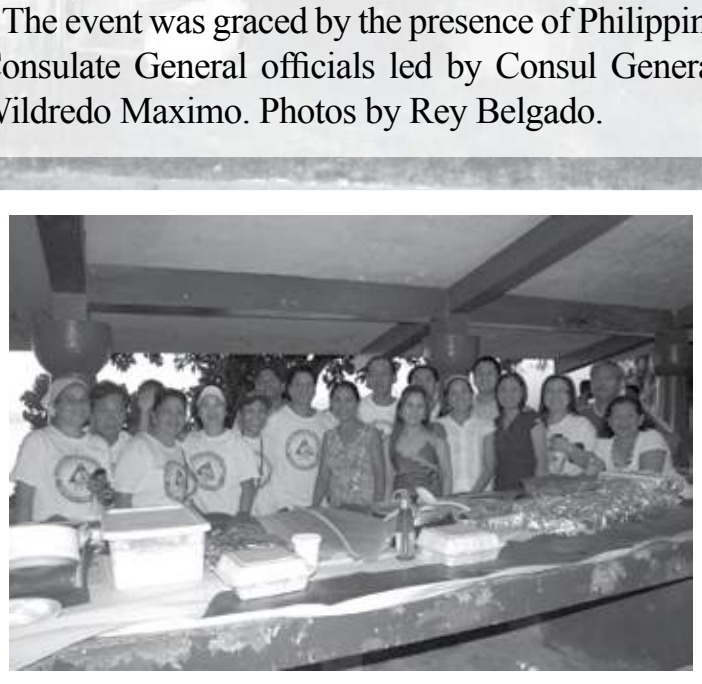
With this personal introduction, I begin yet another semester introducing my students to the joys of Philippine history.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

Farewell dinner for ex-Bayani president

The Bayani Association held a farewell dinner for its former president, Daniel Nicomedes, at the 13 Fishermen's Monument on Nov. 2, 2008. Nicomedes was due to leave the islands to go back home to the Philippines.

The event was graced by the presence of Philippine Consulate General officials led by Consul General Wildredo Maximo. Photos by Rey Belgado.



Youngstyle

The sweet success of US candymakers

THE WASHINGTON POST

Despite the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Mars company made so much money selling their Milky Ways, left, that they invested in a racehorse named Snickers. That's what the family called its next great candy bar, right. Below, non-melting M&M's were invented in World War II as a morale-boosting treat for U.S. troops.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Invented in 1931, the long-lasting Tootsie Pops, top, that offered two candies on one stick outsold many other popular treats because it was seen as a better deal. Candy corn, which showed up in stores in the Midwest in 1900, were created in honor of America's farm families.

By KAREN SCHWARTZ
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

It's Halloween night, and you've just poured out all your candy into a magnificent pile on the kitchen table. Your parents laugh, smile and take pictures, but you know in your heart they really don't see much value in that 10 pounds of loot you collected. Pretty soon they will start laying down horrible rules about how little of it they will allow you to eat.

But KidsPost recently discovered that a lot of Halloween candy has enormous value. Believe it or not, your pile of sweets is educational! It's basically a sugar-coated textbook on American history and business.

Just share with your parents a sweet treat of candy history and watch them perk right up. Caution: After looking at this guide, parents may ask for "just a taste." Additionally, they may brag to your friends' parents that Halloween at your house is actually an enriching experience.

Tootsie Rolls: We all know that the United States is a nation of immigrants. Thank one of them for the Tootsie Roll. Candymaker Leo Hirshfield came to the United States from Austria in 1896. He invented the Tootsie Roll as a less expensive alternative to fancy chocolate and named the treat for his daughter, Clara "Tootsie" Hirshfield.

Candy corn: These sweet little kernels, which showed up in stores in the Midwest in 1900, were created in honor of America's hardworking farm families. Candy corn was such a success that the manufacturer tried selling candy turnips. Didn't work.

Milky Way and Snickers: During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Americans lost their jobs and their life savings. But people still bought sweets, and the Mars company, now based in Virginia, made so much money selling their Milky Ways, they invested in a racehorse named Snickers. Guess what the family decided to call its next great candy bar?

Tootsie Pops: Another big hit during the Depression. Invented in 1931, the new long-lasting lollipop that offered two candies on one stick outsold many other popular treats because it was seen as a better deal.

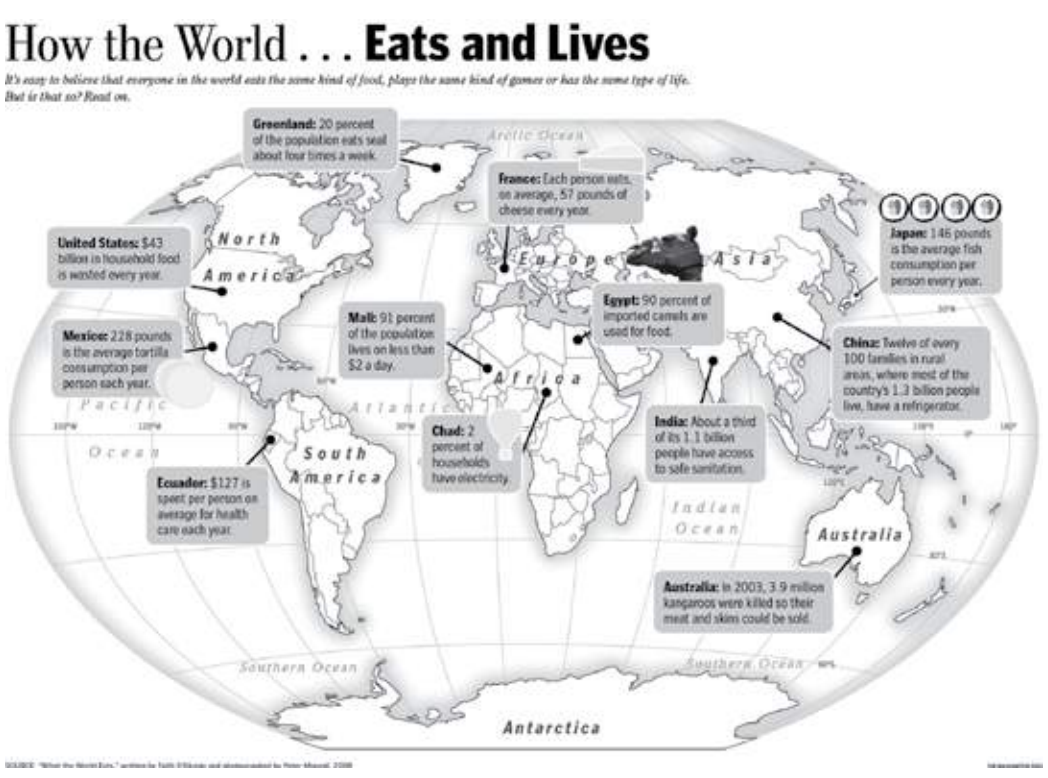
M&M's: Another sweet treat from Mars. This conveniently non-melting candy was invented in World War II as a morale-boosting treat for American troops.

Reese's Peanut Butter Cups: In 1922, Harry Burnett Reese quit his job working as a dairy farmer for Hershey's chocolate and invented the peanut butter cup in his basement. In 1963, Hershey bought Reese's company for $23.5 million.

CANDY FACT

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Jolly Rancher candy was created by the Harmsen family of Colorado in the mid-1900s. The family gave up farming and turned their barn into a candy factory!


How the World . . . Eats and Lives
It's easy to believe that everyone in the world eats the same kind of food, plays the same kind of games or has the same type of life. But is that so? Read on.
Greenland: 20 percent of the population eats seal about four times a week.
France: Each person eats, on average, 57 pounds of cheese every year.
United States: $43 billion in household food is wasted every year.
Japan: 146 pounds is the average fish consumption per person every year.
Egypt: 90 percent of imported cereals are used for food.
Mexico: 228 pounds is the average tortilla consumption per person each year.
Mali: 91 percent of the population lives on less than $2 a day.
China: Twelve of every 100 families in rural areas, where most of the country's 1.3 billion people live, have a refrigerator.
Chad: 2 percent of households have electricity.
India: About a third of its 1.1 billion people have access to safe sanitation.
Ecuador: $127 is spent per person on average for health care each year.
Australia: In 2003, 3.9 million kangaroos were killed so their meat and skins could be sold.
North America
Europe
Asia
Africa
South America
Australia
Antarctica
Arctic Ocean
Pacific Ocean
Atlantic Ocean
Indian Ocean
Southern Ocean

WORLD FOOD FACT

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On average, Americans each consume 157 pounds of sugar and sweeteners a year.

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Quantum of Solace
Friday 4:20 7:05 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:20 7:05
Mon and Thurs 4:20 7:05
Daniel Craig, Judi Dench
Action, Adventure • Rated PG
Synopsis
Betrayed by Vesper, the woman he loved, 007 fights the urge to make his latest mission personal. Pursuing his determination to uncover the truth, James Bond and M interrogate Mr. White who reveals the organization which blackmailed Vesper is far more complex and dangerous than anyone had imagined. Forensic intelligence links an Mi6 traitor to a bank account in Haiti where a case of mistaken identity introduces Bond to the beautiful but feisty Camille, a woman who has her own vendetta.

Madagascar Escape 2 Africa
Friday 4:10 7:25 9:40
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:25 9:40
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:25
Mon and Thurs 4:10 7:25
Ben Stiller, Chris Rock
Comedy, Animated • Rated PG
Synopsis
Alex the lion, Marty the zebra, Melman the giraffe and Gloria the hippo, King Julien, Maurice and the penguins find themselves in the wildest place of all–the vast plains of Africa—where our zoo-raised crew encounter species of their own kind for the very first time. While discovering their roots, they quickly find the differences between the concrete jungle and the heart of Africa. Despite long-lost relatives, romantic rivals and scheming hunters, Africa seems like a great place--but is it better than their Central Park home?

Role Models
Friday 4:15 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:25 4:15 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:25 4:15 7:00
Mon and Thurs 4:15 7:00
Seann William Scott, Paul Rudd
Comedy, Drama • Rated R
Synopsis
Two salesmen, Wheeler and Danny, trash a company truck on an energy drink-fueled bender. Upon their arrest, the court gives them a choice: do hard time or spend 150 service hours with a mentorship program. After one day with the kids, however, jail doesn't look half bad. Surrounded by annoying do-gooders, Danny struggles with every neurotic impulse to guide Augie through the trials of becoming a man.

High School Musical 3
Friday 4:00 7:10 9:45
Saturday 1:15 4:00 7:10 9:45
Sunday 1:15 4:00 7:10
Mon and Thurs 4:00 7:10
Zac Efron, Ashley Tisdale
Musical • Rated G

Soul Men
Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
Saturday 1:10 4:30 7:15 9:55
Sunday 1:10 4:30 7:15
Mon and Thurs 4:30 7:15
Samuel L. Jackson, Bernie MAc
Comedy • Rated R

Max Payne
Friday 4:25 7:30 10:00
Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:30 10:00
Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:30
Mon and Thurs 4:25 7:30
Mark Wahlberg, Mila Kunis
Action, Adventure • Rated PG 13

Eagle Eye
Friday 4:05 7:20 9:50
Saturday 1:00 4:05 7:20 9:50
Sunday 1:00 4:05 7:20
Mon and Thurs 4:05 7:20
Shia LaBeouf, Michelle Monaghan
Drama • Rated PG 13

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DON'T GET SQUASHED trying to count all of the pumpkins in our picture. See if you can match our total.

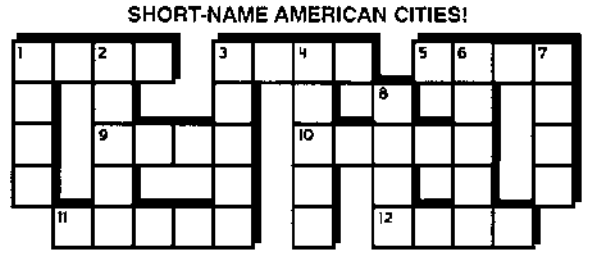
Answer: We found 35 pumpkins.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

SHORT-NAME AMERICAN CITIES!

Illustrated by David Coulson



Below are the names of 14 American cities that you will need to complete the puzzle above. Use the trial-and-error method.

4-letter words:
AMES
BEND
ELKO
LIMA
ROME
SWAN
WACO
WARD

5-letter words:
BLAIR
CULLY
NITRO
OMAHA
TAMPA
TYLER

Answers: (Across) 1. Waco. 3. Bend. 5. Rome. 9. Lima. 10. Tampa. 11. Tyler. 12. Swan. (Down) 1. Ward. 2. Cully. 3. Blair. 4. Nitro. 8. Ames. 6. Omaha. 7. Elko.

IT'S LOG-ON TIME! See if you can compute the answer to this Alpha-Math puzzle. You must replace the letters on the computer screen with the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 so that you have a correct addition problem. The same letters get the same digits.

One Answer: D=9, O=2, T=4, C=6, M=3, S=1, I=5, E=7. (924 + 623 = 1547).

LINK-UPS! Here's a list of 12 one-syllable words that are divided into two columns. Turn them into six longer words by linking them together. To do this, draw a line from the word in the left column to a word in the right column.

1.	OUT	PORT
2.	PLAN	NEST
3.	RAP	AGES
4.	SCAN	RANT
5.	THIN	TEST
6.	WAR	KING

Answers: 1. Outages. 2. Planking. 3. Rapport. 4. Scantest. 5. Thinnest. 6. Warrant.

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Chew on this

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My neighbor's puppy has a ton of toys that he chews on all the time. Is this healthy? —Joe E., Atlanta

DEAR JOE: Yes, as long as the toys are specifically made for dogs. Chewing is an instinctive activity for dogs that keeps their teeth and jaws healthy and strong. For puppies, chewing not only helps them develop properly, but it also eases the discomfort of teething.

A dog will chew on anything that looks chewable—as many a dog owner has ruefully discovered after finding a favorite pair of shoes in shreds. So keeping many safe chew toys within the dog's reach, and featuring chew toys and tug ropes (thick, braided short ropes you can hang onto while the dog pulls at the other end) during play and training will help ease that urge to chew on everything.

Safe chew toys do not shred or shatter when a dog sinks his teeth into them—something you don't want to happen, as shards can cut a dog's gums, and swallowing debris can cause serious health problems. So owners should buy only approved toys that are appropriate for their dog's age and size. A Great Dane shouldn't be chewing on a toy sized for a Chihuahua, and likewise, a toy poodle might have trouble gnawing on a toy sized for a Doberman.

Paw's corner by Sam Mazzotta

Remember also that owners (and those who will have dogs coming over to visit) should put away any objects they don't want chewed. Shoes, children's toys, plants, newspapers —you name it—should be placed in a room or closet that can't be accessed by the dog. A floor clear of everything but a few strategically placed chew toys is ideal.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman who made the following sage observation: "There are 10^{11} stars in the galaxy. That used to be a huge number. But it's only a hundred billion. It's less than the national deficit! We used to call them astronomical numbers. Now we should call them economical numbers."

■ If you're planning a trip to the great state of Texas next summer, be sure to stop by the small town of Clute in late July. You wouldn't want to miss the Great Mosquito Festival, which features a Mosquito Legs Contest and a Mosquito Calling Contest. It makes you wonder, though: How exactly do you call a mosquito?

■ Statistics show that widows outnumber widowers by a ratio of 5 to 1.

■ Holstein cows are known to be prolific milkers. A good heifer can produce her own weight in milk in just a couple of weeks.

■ Soup is often served as a first course in Western cuisine, but if you travel to China and eat traditional meals, you're more likely to have it as the last course.

■ Are you ambisinister? Don't worry, it's just a fancy way of saying that you're clumsy with both hands. The literal meaning is "with two left hands"—the manual equivalent of having two left feet.

■ It's been reported that gangster Al Capone paid, in today's dollars, upward of $300,000 in bribes every week.

■ More interesting collective nouns: A group of moles is known as a "labor," a flock of turtledoves is called a "pitying" and a school of jellyfish is known as a "smack."

■ The French once raised domesticated beavers as a food source.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Man is a credulous animal, and must believe something; in the absence of good grounds for belief, he will be satisfied with bad ones."—Bertrand Russell

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MAGIC MAZE ● TURN ON THE HEAT

E L J G D A X V S F P N K I D
F C A X V S Q O U L L J H E R
C A X E G N A R V L T R P N Y
L J C H C F N D B I Y X R V E
T R O P O A M B U R N E R L R
K I O G C E L D B G M Z D E X
W N K E R I F P M A C D T E U
T D E F R O S T E R I A N V R
Q O R V N L J T I R E L I O B
G F D C O A S Y G H I X W T V
T S R P O N L K J K I F G S F

Saturday's unlisted clue: DETROIT

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Monday's unlisted clue hint: BAKING APPLIANCE

Boiler	Defroster	Griddle	Range
Burner	Dryer	Grill	Steamer
Campfire	Fireplace	Heater	Stove
Cooker	Furnace	Kiln	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		5
÷		–		x	
	–		÷		1
+		÷		–	
	x		–		13
5		1		17	

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER

GO FIGURE ANSWER

5	1	17		1	
4	x	5	–	7	13
+		÷		–	
÷	–	1	÷	8	1
9	–	1	+	6	5
	–		x		
9	+	6	÷	3	5

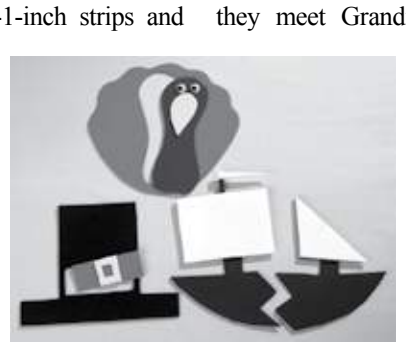
Place card puzzles add fun to feast

Donna's Day Creative family fun by Donna Erickson

Place cards are an indispensable addition to a Thanksgiving meal. They're a little like croutons on a favorite soup, because they add style and pizzazz. They can even be whimsical! This year, let the kids' inspirations for artful place cards enhance your Thanksgiving table decor. Long after you've ladled the gravy over the mashed potatoes for seconds and then thirds, your kids will remember the special contribution they made to the festivities. Here are two ideas:

Simple Place Cards

Homemade place cards can be as easy as cutting strips of nice paper or cardstock into 1-1/2-by-1-inch strips and writing out each person's name with a special pen. Decorate by drawing a simple portrait of the person to the side of the name, or add Thanksgiving-themed stickers. Set them on each plate over a folded napkin, or insert them in standard place-card stands. (Tip: Larger index cards give young children more space to write and draw).



Puzzle Place Cards

Make each puzzle place card out of cardboard, construction paper or craft foam sheets. Draw and cut out the shape of an object with a Thanksgiving theme, such as a pilgrim hat, an ear of corn or a pumpkin pie. Paint or color the shape with markers if you wish. Make a different Thanksgiving design or symbol for each place setting.

Cut out a portion of the shape, which will be a puzzle piece. The cutout could be obvious, such as a feather on a turkey, or more complicated, like a random wavy shape typical of a traditional puzzle.

Set the Thanksgiving table with a place card at each setting, minus the cutout. When guests arrive, put children in charge of giving a missing place-card piece to each guest. When they meet Grandfather at the door, they'll be bursting with excitement. Will he find his place at the table? Kids love to know a special secret that grown-ups have to figure out!

At mealtime, it's a fun and memorable moment for all when each person finds the place card that completes the puzzle to discover who they will sit beside. Don't be surprised if your kids ask to play the place-card puzzle game with new creations for December holiday gatherings.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Juanes at Latin Grammys: Sweep, top honors, record

HOUSTON (AP)—On a night when the theme of change and cultural fusion echoed in lyrics, performances and acceptance speeches, a Colombian rocker who's become a voice for social issues walked away as king of the Latin Grammys.

At Thursday's Houston debut of the ceremony, Juanes, a singer-songwriter from Medellin who started a foundation to help land-mine victims, swept awards in all five categories for which he was nominated, including record of the year and album of the year. He also set a new record for total wins, bringing his total Latin Grammy trophies to 17 - breaking Alejandro Sanz's mark of 14.

"I can't believe it. I am very, very happy, very grateful to life, to music, to God, to the Academy," Juanes said after the awards, noting that he had trouble containing his amazement while accepting the awards. "For me, this has been incredible. It's a dream."

Juanes' joy-filled love song, "Me Enamora," won record of the year, song of the year and best short form music video. He also took trophies for the year's best album, and best male pop vocal album for "La Vida ... Es Un Ratico."

After his record of the year win, Juanes spoke to the country's Latinos: "You have chosen the right president. Congratulations. It is time to change" - the last line being the title of his latest song.

He also opened the show's live broadcast with an emotional duet with soul singer John Legend. Backed by a chorus, Juanes and Legend performed "If You Are Out There," a new collaboration that's scheduled to be released next week.

Juanes was also part of the closing number, featuring Spanish singer Rosario, and set against a montage of images of homes and lives devastated by land mines.

Gustavo Santaolalla, an Argentine musician-turned-composer whose scores for "Babel" and "Brokeback Mountain" earned him two Oscars and was nominated for five Latin Grammys Thursday, also won two Latin Grammys as producer on Juanes' record of the year and album of the year.

Among the night's other winners was Puerto Rican singer Kany Garcia, a nominee in three categories, who walked away with two Latin Grammys, winning best new artist honors and best female pop vocal album for "Cualquier Dia."

"How do I feel? Super-happy," said Garcia, after receiving the awards. "This has been a marvelous year."

Mexican alternative rock group Cafe Tacuba, which led the night's nominations with six, picked up awards for rock song of the year for "Esta Vez" and alternative song of the year for "Volver a Comenzar."

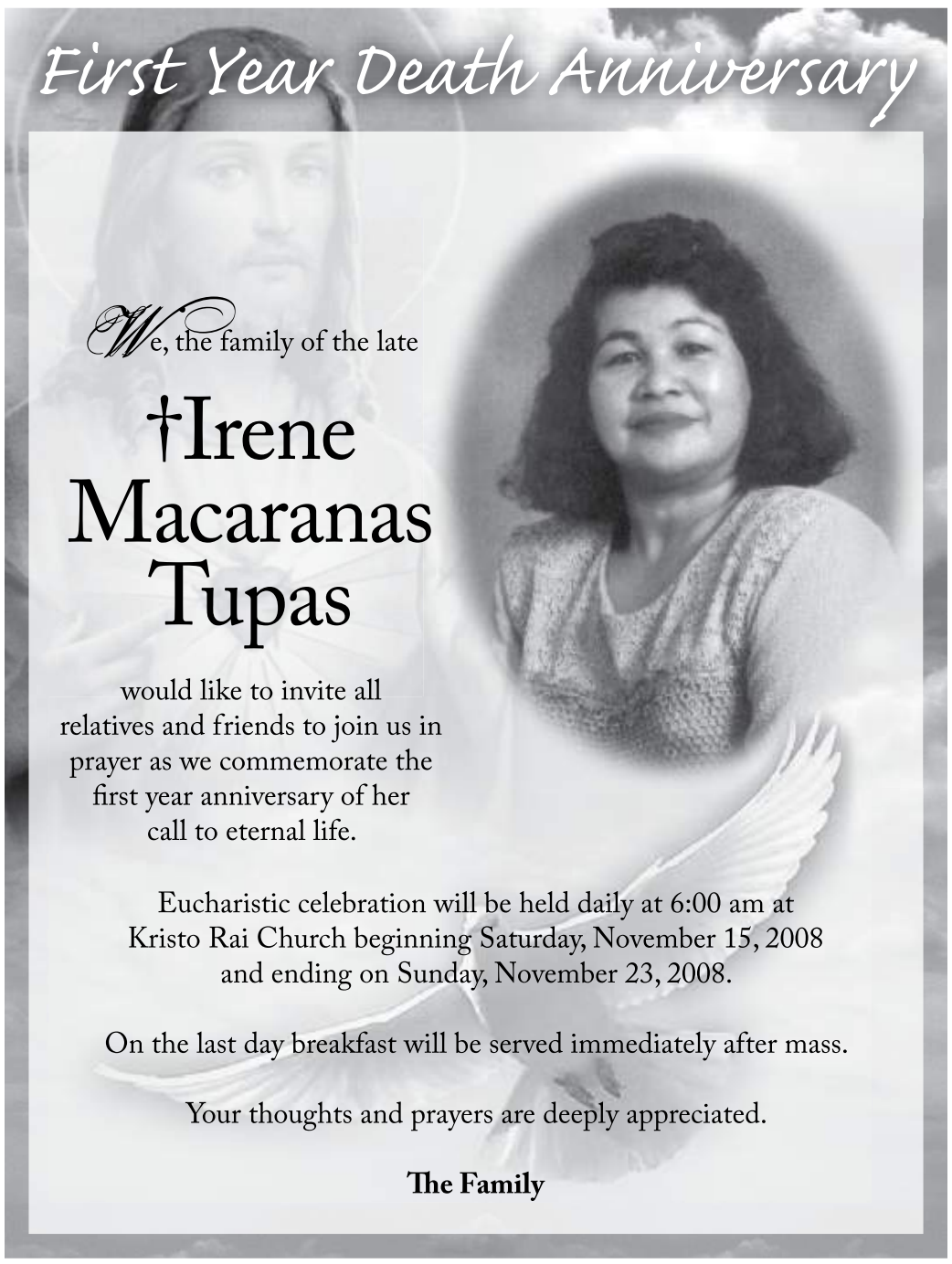
Latin pop diva Gloria Estefan, who was honored with the 2008 Latin Recording Academy Person of the Year award Wednesday night, also scooped up awards for best traditional tropical album for "90 millas" and best tropical song.

"The only thing left for me to do is to sing in a free Cuba," said Estefan, who is the first woman to receive the person of the year honors.

In pre-show awards, Mexican singer-songwriter Julieta Venegas picked up two Latin Grammys for best long form video and best alternative music album.

AP

Juanes, left, holds his five awards as he is joined by Gustavo Santoalalla backstage at the 9th annual Latin Grammy Awards on Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008 in Houston.


First Year Death Anniversary
We, the family of the late
†Irene Macaranas Tupas
would like to invite all relatives and friends to join us in prayer as we commemorate the first year anniversary of her call to eternal life.
Eucharistic celebration will be held daily at 6:00 am at Kristo Rai Church beginning Saturday, November 15, 2008 and ending on Sunday, November 23, 2008.
On the last day breakfast will be served immediately after mass.
Your thoughts and prayers are deeply appreciated.
The Family

Elton John celebrates 'Billy Elliot' on Broadway

NEW YORK (AP)—Elton John still can't believe he's a Broadway hitmaker.

The 61-year-old musician marveled at his success Thursday night at the opening of "Billy Elliot." He composed the score for that show, "Aida" and "The Lion King," which is still playing on the Great White Way.

"I'm looking up at the street and I'm seeing the sign for 'The Lion King,' and I'm standing here and I'm thinking, 'I had never thought in a million years I'd ever be standing in Broadway and talking about something I'd written for the stage," said John, beaming with pride.

John, accompanied by partner David Furnish, said he'd rather write a musical than record an album because he likes having a story line and characters. "I love it—but I've got a lot to learn," he said. "I'm a novice at this."

"Billy Elliot," at the Imperial Theater, is based on the popular 2000 movie about a young boy who longs to dance but lives in the bleak coal-mining area of Northern England. His story is set against the backdrop of a bitter miners' strike.

"It's a triumph over adversity. It's something beautiful coming out of something tragic," John mused about the show, which has had successful runs in London and Sydney, Australia.

The role of Billy has been cast with three actors—David Alvarez, Trent Kowalik and Kiril Kulish—rotating the physically demanding part.

Joining John at Thursday's performance: Barbara Walters, Rosie O'Donnell, Ron Howard, Rachel Weisz, Kevin Spacey, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and tennis legend Billie Jean King. Periusto do consenit ad euisi blaorem doluptate do commolorper iure tionulla feugait wis alisi.

Whoopi to produce a musical 'Sister Act' in London

NEW YORK (AP)—Whoopi Goldberg is getting in the act again with "Sister Act."

The performer will produce but not star in a London stage version of her hit 1992 movie about an on-the-lam singer who hides out in a convent. The musical will open June 2, 2009, at the London Palladium, with preview performances beginning May 6.

Goldberg will join forces with Stage Entertainment, one of Europe's largest theatrical producers, a company headed by Joop Van Den Ende, in presenting the show.

"I really liked the direction they were going in," Goldberg said in a telephone interview. "It (the film) is almost 20 years old. Rather than have someone repeat what was, you have to take it and redo it. That's what they've done and they've done it really well."

The musical, directed by Peter Schneider, has a score by Alan Menken (music) and Glen Slater (lyrics), who collaborated on Broadway's "Little Mermaid" last season. The book is by Cherie and Bill Steinkellner, veteran television writers for such shows as "Cheers." The choreography is by Anthony Van Laast, who did the dances for both the stage and film versions of "Mamma Mia!"

"Sister Act" had its world premiere at the Pasadena Playhouse in California in 2006 and later played Atlanta's Alliance Theatre.

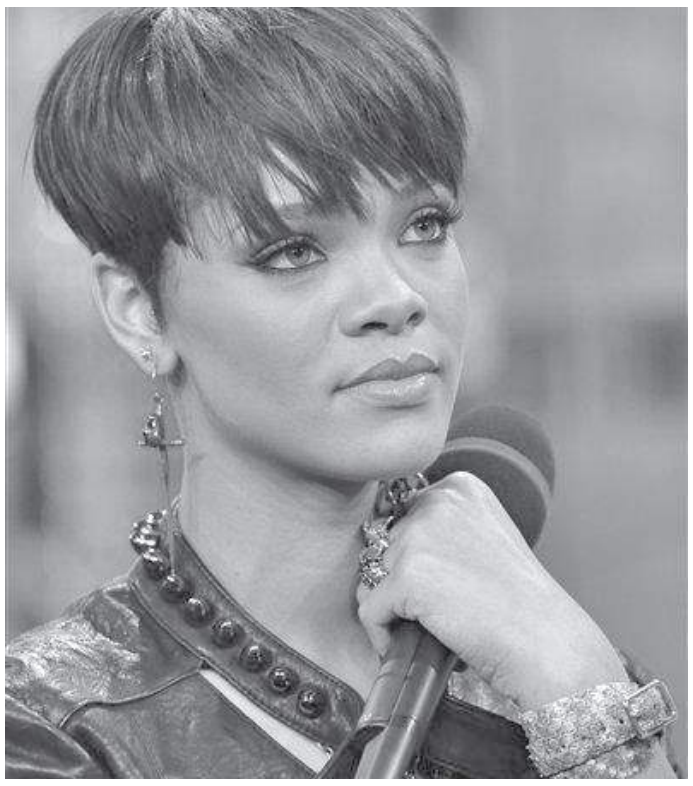
No word yet on casting.

"The show is fun," Goldberg continued. "It's not boring. And if I'm not bored, I'm your pal."

But there are changes in the story, the performer added.

"She (the singer) still is a woman running away ... hidden away with all those nuns, a fish out of water," Goldberg said. "But she is not as old as I am or was at the time (the movie was filmed). So she has a lot of decisions to make, more decisions to make than my character had. So it will be fun to watch. I'm excited."Pat iustis num auguer senit iriurerit nibh estrud tetuerostrud el iure er amconsenim

Pop singer Rihanna cancels Indonesia show



AP

In this June 17, 2008 file photo, singer Rihanna makes an appearance on MTV's Total Request Live in New York.

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Rihanna has canceled a concert scheduled Friday in Indonesia over security concerns.

Dive Purnomo, a spokeswoman for the event organizer, said the 20-year-old singer had been scheduled to perform before a sold-out crowd of 6,000 in the capital, Jakarta.

But she changed her mind while in Australia, one of several countries that issued a travel advisory to citizens in Indonesia after the weekend executions of three Islamic militants convicted in the 2002 Bali bombings.

The men called on followers to carry out revenge attacks if their deaths by firing squad went ahead. Purnomo, of Show Master Live, said she hoped the "Umbrella" singer would come to Jakarta in January.

O'Neal, son delay entering pleas in meth cases

MALIBU, Calif. (AP)—Ryan O'Neal and his son have delayed entering pleas in their felony drug cases until after the new year. The Oscar-nominated actor and his son appeared in court Thursday morning, where attorneys asked a judge for more time to review evidence. The 67-year-old actor and his 23-year-old son were ordered to return on Jan. 9.

They were arrested in September when Los Angeles sheriff's deputies did a routine parole check on Redmond O'Neal, who was staying at his father's Malibu home.

O'Neal, 67, was nominated for a best actor Academy Award for 1970's "Love Story." Redmond, 23, is his son from a relationship with Farrah Fawcett.

The actor's attorney has denied the drugs belonged to his client.

'SNL' hires 2 new cast members

NEW YORK (AP)—"Saturday Night Live" was left with some big shoes to fill when Amy Poehler departed for her new role of motherhood.

As a step in that direction, two fresh recruits, Abby Elliott and Michaela Watkins, will be joining the show this week as featured players, NBC announced Thursday.

Elliott comes to "SNL" via the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre—the improv/sketch company co-founded by Poehler—where she trained and performed in both New York and Los Angeles. She is a second-generation "SNL" cast member whose father, Chris Elliott, was a regular on the show during the 1994-95 season. (Her grandfather, Bob Elliott, was teamed for four decades with Ray Goulding in the comedy duo Bob & Ray.)

A native of Wilton, Conn., Elliott also trained with the Los Angeles-based Groundlings theater.

Watkins is a fellow Groundlings alum, where past "SNL" players including Will Ferrell, Phil Hartman, Laraine Newman and current cast member Kristen Wiig got their start. Watkins was born in Syracuse, N.Y., and raised in Boston.

Poehler, a longtime "SNL" regular who is married to comedian Will Arnett, last performed on the Oct. 23 prime-time special. She gave birth to a son, Archie Arnett, just hours before she was to appear on the Oct. 25 broadcast.

AP

In this Sept. 16, 2007, file photo Tina Fey is seen in Los Angeles.

Fey, Cruise among Walters' 10 'Fascinating People'

NEW YORK (AP)—Another year, another set of fascinating people.

Barbara Walters is weighing in with her annual "10 Most Fascinating People" special, and for 2008, the honor roll includes Tom Cruise, Tina Fey and Will Smith.

Walters will also feature Rush Limbaugh, Miley Cyrus and Michael Phelps. The show will air Dec. 4, ABC announced Thursday.

The network did not release the names of the other four honorees, including the No. 1 Most Fascinating Person of 2008. The list is drawn from the year's most prominent names in entertainment, sports, politics and pop culture.

Kanye says he's 'voice of this generation'

AP

In this Sept. 26, 2007 file photo, Rapper Kanye West arrives at the "Us Weekly Hot Hollywood 2007" party in Los Angeles.

LONDON (AP)—Kanye West is to music what Michael Jordan was to basketball - at least that's what West thinks, in his humble estimation.

"I realize that my place and position in history is that I will go down as the voice of this generation, of this decade, I will be the loudest voice," he said in an interview on Wednesday. "It's me settling into that position of just really accepting that it's one thing to say you want to do it and it's another thing to really end up being like Michael Jordan."

The Grammy-winning rapper-producer said Justin Timberlake had a chance to be music's MVP, but hasn't put out enough material. (Timberlake's last album was in 2006, while West released a CD last year and is releasing his latest—"808s and Heartbreak"—on Nov. 24.)

"There were people who had the potential to do it but they went on vacation, so when Justin went on vacation I made albums," he said. "And it just came out to be that."

West, 31, said life has been difficult since his mother's death. Donda West died last November after having plastic surgery.

"I'm just going through balancing that. And I always used to have that support system, you know. My mom would be there; no matter what, she was there before everything," he said. "We were together for like 30 years. And you know now when I'm on that stage and I look out and I say, 'What am I going to do with the rest of my life?' Like when does a real life start?' Because I have sacrificed real life to be a celebrity and to give this art to people, which is great. It is great that I was able to do that, I'm not trying to shun that in any way, but it's definitely a Catch-22 and it's bittersweet."

Bride-to-be second-guesses couple's 30-year age gap

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am 24 years old and engaged to a man who is 54. I love him with all my heart, but I haven't told my father yet.

My fiance takes very good care of me, and we have a lot in common. We get along great. We have been together for three years and have had only one big fight. We can talk about everything. Do you think dating someone twice your age is OK?

LOVED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR LOVED: Much depends upon the level of maturity of the people involved. Some 54-year-old men are young and vigorous for their ages, and some 24-year-old women are mature in their thinking and level of experience. But you can't entirely ignore the numbers.

In a case like yours, my concern is that you still feel it's necessary to hide something as important as an engagement from your father. Does your father even know about this man? Do you plan to have children? And because your fiance is so much older than you, has it occurred to you that you might wind up taking care of him?

What I think is that you have some serious thinking to do about what lies ahead.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My stepdaughter, "Hannah," had a baby last year at the age of 16. She had decided to place her baby for adoption, but changed her mind the day before she gave birth. Hannah's father and I told her we would help because we wanted her to finish high school and participate in school activities.

The problem is, she is out with her friends or at school functions almost every night while we take care of the baby, whom we adore. My concern is, how much help should we be giving her? Should we let Hannah just be a teenager until she graduates?

I think there should be a happy medium between being a teenager and being a parent, but my husband thinks we should shoulder all the responsibility.

MICHIGAN NANA

DEAR NANA: I could not disagree more with your husband. He is doing his daughter no favors by insisting that you and he shoulder all the responsibility for that baby. Hannah needs to bond with that child. Unless she does, you will be raising it until he or she is an adult. These are important years in your grandchild's development, and your stepdaughter needs to be a part of it. Period!

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm so upset I can't stop crying. My wedding is in seven weeks. My fiance and I have planned this wedding for nearly a year.

Last week, my aunt told me she has only a short time to live and that she has decided to have her memorial while she is still living. Abby, she picked the day of our wedding.

It is too late and too expensive for us to change the date. We're already getting our RSVPs back. I don't know what to do. It leaves me wondering why she would choose to do this. Please help!

DENISE IN MUSKEGON, MICH.

DEAR DENISE: It IS too late to alter your wedding plans. Unless your aunt is literally breathing her last breath—which is doubtful if she's well enough to be planning her memorial—ask your parents to talk with her and ask her to please reschedule it for another date. Your aunt appears to be extremely self-centered, and no relative should have to make a choice on that day between life and death.

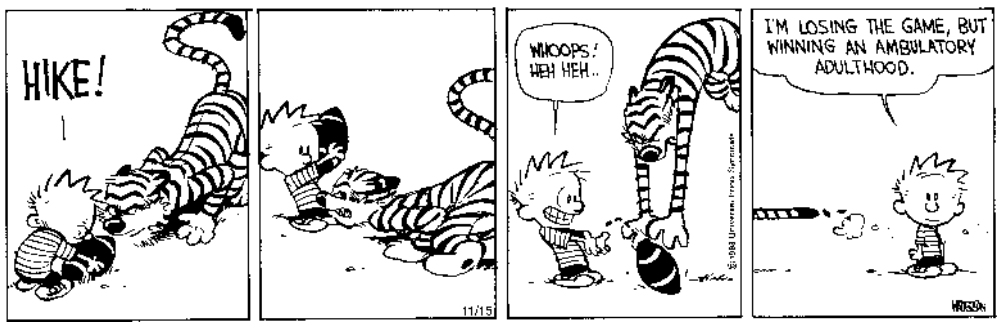
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



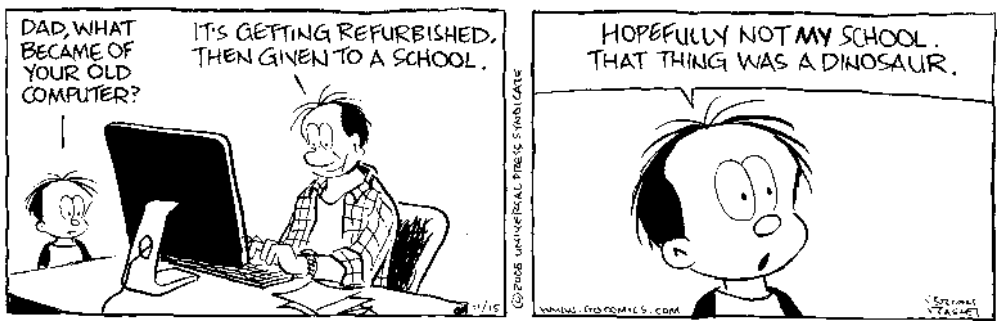
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

GARFIELD, ALL I THINK ABOUT IS LIZ...
JIM DAVIS 11-15
I CAN'T THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...
I CAN'T GET MY MIND OFF THAT HAM IN THE THE FRIDGE

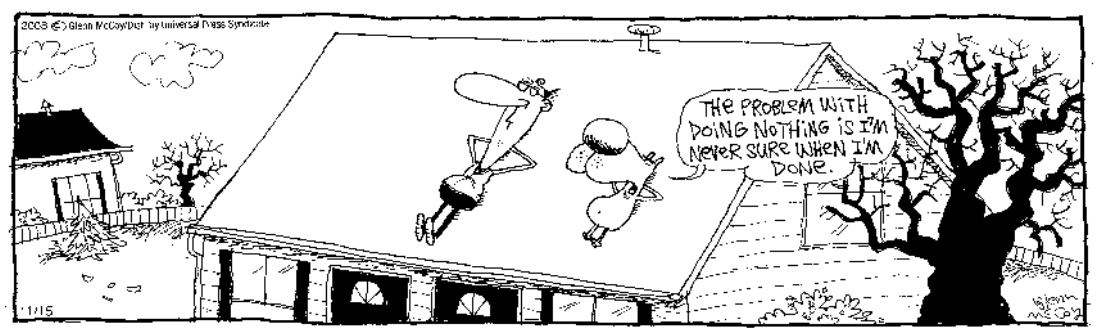
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, WHAT BECAME OF YOUR OLD COMPUTER?
IT'S GETTING REFURBISHED, THEN GIVEN TO A SCHOOL.
HOPEFULLY NOT MY SCHOOL. THAT THING WAS A DINOSAUR.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

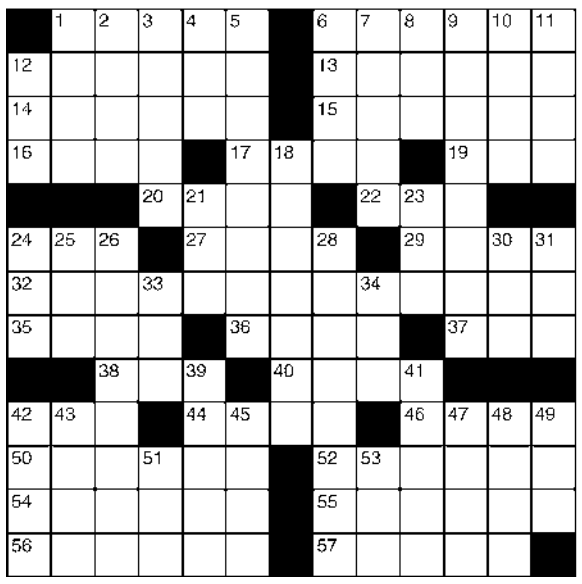
ACROSS
1 Bourbon-based beverage
6 Concludes
12 Gold-based compound
13 Cruise ships
14 Attack verbally
15 Gets up
16 Caffeine-laced nut
17 Addict
19 Caught off base
20 "Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, ..." end
22 Move a rowboat
24 Commercials
27 Horatio Alger's "before"
29 Multi-colored
32 In the catbird seat
35 Boot attachment
36 Shipbuilding wood
37 Blackjack component
38 "See ya"
40 Garbage barge
42 Weep loudly
44 Partner
46 Aware of
50 Pressed
52 On 13-Across
54 Actor Depardieu
55 Swallowed hard
56 Sweeties
57 New Jersey county

DOWN
1 2007 Ellen Page movie
2 Kazakhstan river
3 South American capital
4 Zeta follower
5 Peevish
6 Otherwise
7 Explosive compound
8 "CSI" evidence
9 Monterrey miss
10 Pakistan language
11 "Hey, you!"
12 Request
18 Imply
21 Swiss canton
23 Unoriginal one
24 Donkey
25 Party bowlful
26 Obstinate
28 Sputnik started it
30 List-ending abbr.
31 Easter-egg preparation
33 Take a whack at
34 Old Hollywood initials
39 Abrasive powder
41 Cashmere and pashmina
42 — of relief
43 Sandwich treat
45 Tosses into the mix
47 Scruff
48 Big dinosaur, briefly
49 Peculiar
51 Dundee denial
53 Clear the tables

Solution time: 27 mins.

M	O	P		A	M	I	O		C	L	E	F
A	G	O		B	O	O	R		L	E	E	R
T	R	U	E	B	L	J	E		O	I	L	Y
T	T	T	R	A	D		S	O	W			
			I	C	Y		S	U	N	T	A	N
S	P	A	C	Y		J	E		E	T	A	
U	L	N	A		B	J	U		G	R	O	G
B	E	E		P	E	G		D	U	M	P	S
S	A	W	R	E	D		M		L			
			U	Z	I		A	R	A	B	L	E
F	E	R	N		Z	A	N	E	G	R	E	Y
O	V	E	N		E	P	I	C		A	G	E
B	E	V	Y		N	E	A	T		G	O	D

Yesterday's answer 11-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Zena Grey, 20; Jonny Lee Miller, 36; Beverly D'Angelo, 57; Sam Waterston, 68

Happy Birthday: Believe in your talent and forge ahead with confidence and you will succeed. Keep your circle of friends and peers tight. It's the surprise factor that will give you the edge. Make some changes at home and rid yourself of those who don't believe in you. Your numbers are 3, 12, 17, 24, 31, 37, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't mix emotions and business. You can't buy favors, so don't even bother trying to impress someone that way. You are better off just being yourself and seeing what happens. You've always been self-sufficient in the past. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Work on your relationships. Plan an outing that will please a friend, your family or your lover. Open up about your feelings and let things unfold naturally. There is a lot for you to learn about handling others. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Conjuring up ideas and implementing them will enable you to alter the situation you face. Getting together with people who work in the same field or who have similar interests will help you gain confidence and the connections needed to get ahead. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You won't be able to hide the way you feel, so you may as well let it out. The end result will be remarkably good. Clearing the air will ease stress and make you realize you are not standing alone. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You may have to redefine your position and purpose regarding both friends and family relations. Getting involved in something that helps you understand the way you feel will also give you the strength to resolve issues that have been bothering you. Make the necessary changes. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You can come up with a solution to any problem if you stay calm and take a practical approach. Once you sort through what's not working for you, everything will take a positive turn. The sooner you act, the better you will feel. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Look into job opportunities that will bring you more satisfaction or money. Don't limit yourself geographically. Put your needs first. A change of scenery will do you good. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Be careful not to give in to someone looking for a handout. Put your time, effort and cash into your surroundings. A social change will do you good, so don't hesitate to try activities that enable you to make new friends. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Avoid trouble by seeing every detail through to the end. If you delegate too much to others, you will not get the results you are looking for. Someone is likely to make a fast move at the last minute that may ruin your plans. Be prepared. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Relax and put any worries about work or unfinished jobs out of mind. Concentrate on the people you love and building a strong, secure relationship that will stand the test of time. Actions speak louder than words. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Arguments will not solve problems. Back away and consider what you want and who you really want in your life. It may be that you need to diversify in order to grow. Get involved in activities you enjoy or sign up for an interesting course. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): An unexpected turn of events will leave you confused and uncertain about what to do next. Protect your home, family and your assets. Someone you may have wronged in the past will be looking for compensation. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are difficult to figure out but attract great interest and attention. You are original, fearless and entertaining.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			2	7				
		2	4		9	3		
	6						8	
	8						7	1
9								6
7	4						9	
	3						6	
		9	5		3	2		
				8	7			

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	5	8	3	1	4	9	2	7
3	7	1	9	5	2	8	6	4
9	4	2	7	8	6	1	3	5
1	2	5	4	7	9	6	8	3
8	9	7	5	6	3	4	1	2
4	3	6	8	2	1	7	5	9
7	8	3	6	4	5	2	9	1
2	6	9	1	3	7	5	4	8
5	1	4	2	9	8	3	7	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/14

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LOW-FLOW SHOWER HEADS Solution: 9 letters

L	P	U	Y	U	H	S	A	W	M	M	P	G	S	G
R	E	S	P	G	N	O	I	T	C	A	A	N	G	N
A	C	A	E	I	R	P	U	S	H	S	E	I	N	I
T	I	G	K	R	P	E	O	S	T	S	H	R	I	V
E	V	E	L	S	U	E	N	U	E	A	C	E	T	A
D	E	T	C	I	R	T	S	E	R	G	Y	E	T	S
B	D	O	O	R	I	S	A	D	S	I	C	N	E	S
U	H	S	U	G	E	E	W	R	D	N	N	I	S	M
T	A	E	H	N	R	A	P	E	E	G	A	G	N	O
T	T	T	I	A	R	L	S	L	L	P	J	N	I	O
O	E	S	T	E	U	I	U	A	I	A	M	E	R	T
N	U	O	S	M	G	B	I	Y	V	N	S	E	T	H
B	R	U	B	N	R	S	C	R	E	W	E	T	T	S
N	M	E	S	U	R	G	E	V	R	E	S	N	O	C
E	R	G	T	S	U	J	D	A	Y	L	P	P	U	S

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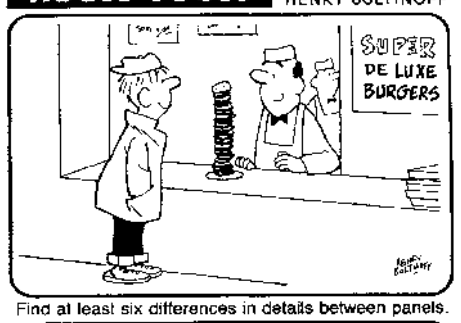
Action, Adjust, Aerator, Business, Button, Cheap, Conserve, Delivery, Design, Device, Door, Energy, Engineering, Gush, Hardware, Heat, House, Jets, Last, Leaks, Line, Massaging, Pipes, Plumber, Pouring, Push, Rated, Relay, Restricted, Resume, Rinse, Saving, Screw, Settings, Smooth, Stay, Stream, Supply, Surge, Temperature, Tighten, Turbulence, Usage, Wash

Yesterday's Answer: Statement

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Burger stack is shorter. 2. Man in background is missing. 3. Slacks have no cuffs. 4. Large sign is different. 5. Customer's nose is smaller. 6. Two small signs are reversed.

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Wishing Well®

5	6	4	3	8	6	4	6	2	6	4	5	2
B	P	T	P	S	R	U	A	H	I	R	E	A
7	5	2	3	4	5	8	2	3	7	6	5	2
A	C	S	E	N	O	T	T	R	L	S	N	E
5	2	6	7	4	3	8	2	3	6	3	4	5
S	N	E	O	O	F	E	D	E	I	C	N	I
2	8	5	4	8	2	8	4	8	3	7	2	3
E	A	D	C	D	C	Y	H	P	T	V	I	L
7	4	3	5	2	3	8	5	3	4	2	6	5
E	A	I	E	S	F	R	R	E	R	I	S	A
2	8	2	8	5	4	2	5	6	8	6	8	7
O	O	N	G	T	M	S	E	B	R	E	E	A
6	7	6	7	6	8	6	8	7	6	7	6	7
S	F	T	F	O	S	W	S	A	E	I	D	R

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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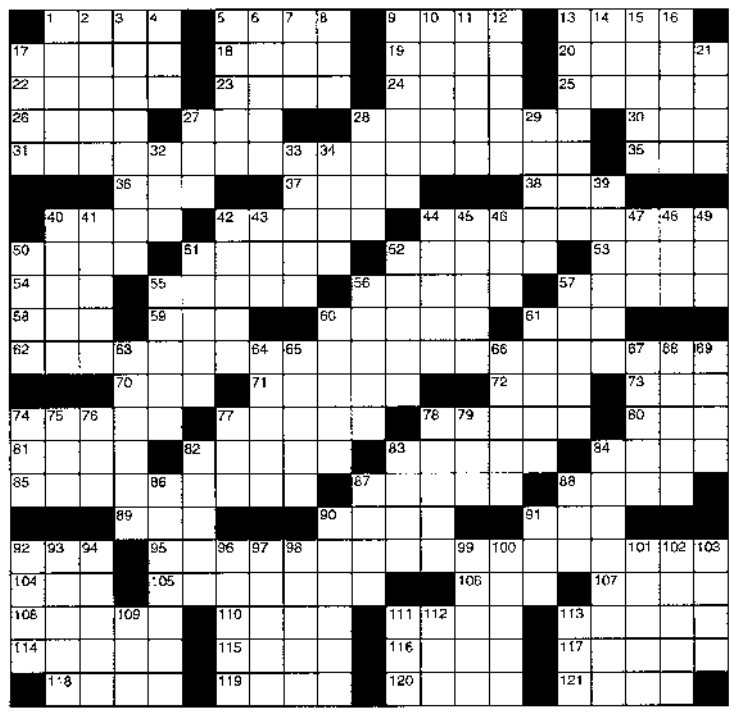
Super Crossword

NO WHEY!

ACROSS
1 TV host John
5 Full of oneself
9 Amontillado container
13 Beseeched
17 Nile feature
18 In good health
19 "— Without Love" ('68 hit)
20 Sanctuary
22 Hood's handle
23 Admiral Zumwalt
24 Tiny part of a second
25 Wagner work
26 Annealing oven
27 Flagon filler
28 Newspaper
30 Take-home
31 Start of a remark
35 Ring stat
36 Thwack
37 Compact cotton
38 "Great Expectations" character
40 Cad
42 Mythical being
44 Hateful
50 Give a little
51 Green
52 Yesterday's thresher
53 Lillian or Dorothy
54 Ivy Leaguer
55 Fancy dessert
56 First cog in space
57 Where cars congregate
58 Pie — mode
59 Lofty peak
60 Distribute the donuts
61 Keats composition
62 Middle of remark
70 Born
71 '87 Peace Prize winner
72 Solidify
73 "— Shook Up" ('57 smash)
74 Corny goddess?
77 Colossal commotion
78 Malicious to the max
80 Where rams romp
81 Bus starter?
82 Thirteen, to a baker
83 Soprano Fleming
84 — impasse
85 Dachshund or donkey
87 Pianist Jorge
88 "— Old Cow Hand" ('36 song)
89 Objective
90 Counter change
91 Botanist Gray
92 Age
95 End of remark
104 Road to enlightenment
105 Generally
106 — choy
107 Rocker Billy
108 Tracking tool
110 Manuscript enc.
111 "Surely you —"
113 Lowliest cadet
114 Caustic
115 Vermont port
116 "New Jack City" actor
117 Beast of Borden
118 Long lunch?
119 For fear that
120 Non-stereo
121 Little ones

DOWN
1 Word form for "end"
2 Nobelist Root
3 Stiffened a shirt
4 Contains
5 Expand
6 Free-for-all
7 City on the Danube
8 Day- —
9 Finger food
10 Stun
11 Less loopy
12 TV's "— Landing"
13 Symbol of immortality
14 Drink like a Doberman
15 Happening
16 Writer Walcott
17 Tyne of "Cagney & Lacey"
21 West. alliance
27 Coldest cont.
28 Audacity
29 Tevye's portrayer
32 Sneeze and wheeze
33 Superior to
34 Chip's chum
39 Infant oinker
40 "Greetings!"
41 Early computer
42 Buccaneers' headquarters
43 Spare part?
44 With 47 Down, Italian export
45 Produces pies
46 Actress Long
47 See 44 Down
48 Manipulate
49 Diffident
50 Drum din
51 Nick of "Q&A"
52 Gets on
55 Perkins role
56 "Frederica" composer
57 Mature
60 Descendant
61 Ready to reduce
63 Silverware city
64 Infirmary item
65 Went wrong
66 Snowy bird
67 "Big Three" site
68 New York city
69 — Bator
74 — au vin
75 Aussie walker
76 Cell stuff
77 Dandy
78 Hailing from Aberystwyth
79 In accord
82 Swashbuckling novelist
83 '48 Hitchcock film
84 Texas town
86 "I Love Lucy" surname
87 Tour-de-France vehicle
88 Adjectival suffix
90 Aptitude
91 Say please
92 Pound of poetry
93 Extend
94 Wrestling giant
96 Twangy
97 Commerce
98 Classical tonet
99 "Hedda Gabler" playwright
100 Club creed
101 What i.e. stands for
102 "Ora pro —"
103 Painter Paul
109 Word on a pump
111 Bowie or Bakker
112 Author Umberto
113 Cossnt a corgi



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. U.S. GOVERNMENT: Seat belts were required to be added to cars as standard equipment in what year?
2. HISTORY: The ancient Inca empire was centered in which South American country?
3. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of creature is a newt?
4. RELIGION: In what year was the original Nicene Creed adopted?
5. LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "sine qua non" mean?
6. GEOGRAPHY: In which U.S. state is the Acadia National Park located?
7. THEATER: Who also is known as "The Demon Barber of Fleet Street"?
8. MOVIES: What was the name of the town in the vampire movie "The Lost Boys"?
9. TELEVISION: What was the name of Phyllis Lindstrom's husband in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"?
10. LITERATURE: The character of Isabel Archer appears in which Henry James novel?

Answers

1. Jan. 1, 1968
2. Peru
3. Salamander
4. 325 A.D.
5. Essential
6. Maine
7. "Sweeney Todd"
8. Santa Carla, Calif.
9. Lars
10. "The Portrait of a Lady"

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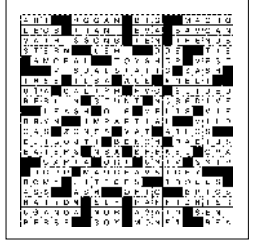
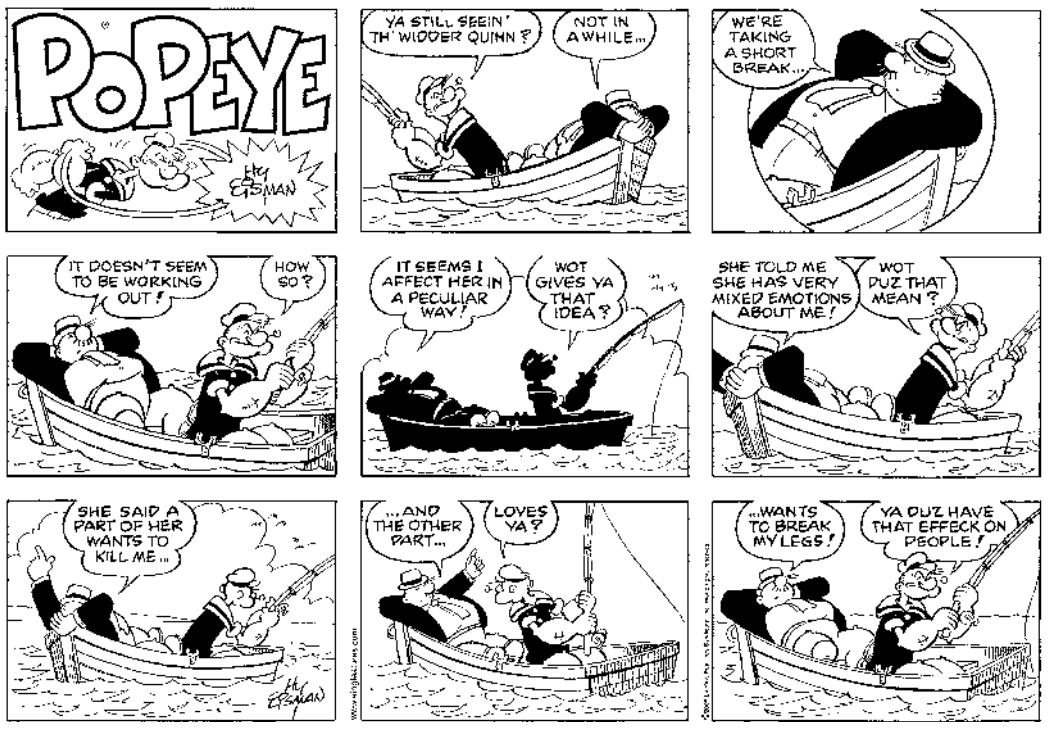
Saturday's Answers



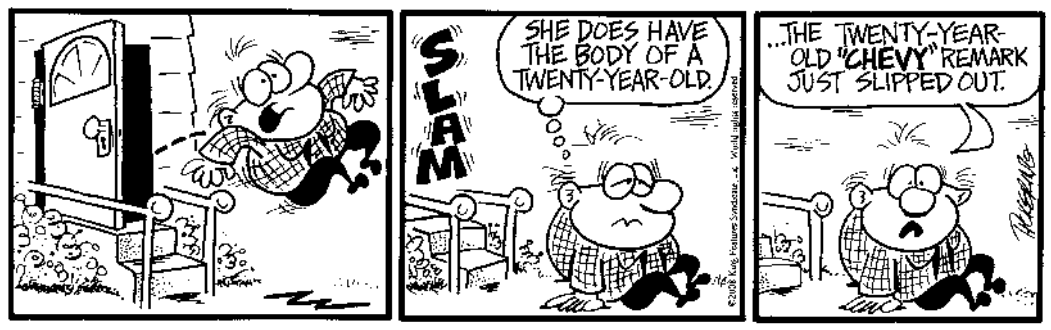

POPEYE
BY E.C. SEGAR
YA STILL SEEIN' TH' WIDDER QUINN?
NOT IN A WHILE...
WE'RE TAKING A SHORT BREAK...
IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE WORKING OUT!
HOW SO?
IT SEEMS I AFFECT HER IN A PECULIAR WAY!
WOT GIVES YA THAT IDEA?
SHE TOLD ME SHE HAS VERY MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT ME!
WOT DUZ THAT MEAN?
SHE SAID A PART OF HER WANTS TO KILL ME...
...AND THE OTHER PART...
LOVES YA?
...WANTS TO BREAK MY LEGS!
YA DUZ HAVE THAT EFFECK ON PEOPLE!

Amber Waves

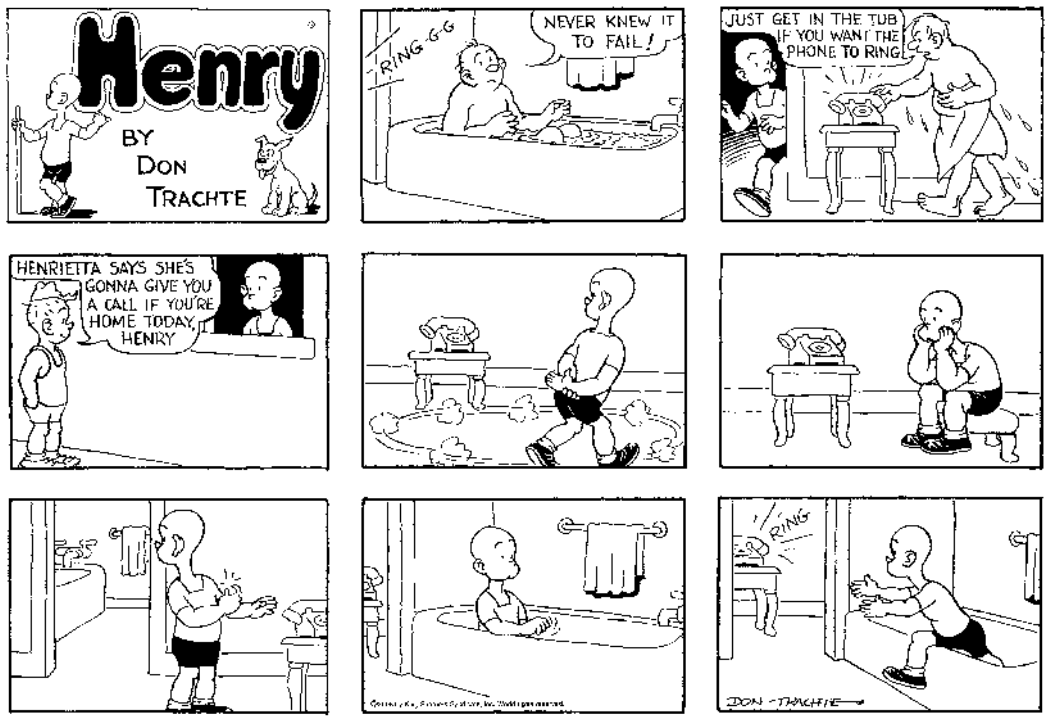
by Dave T. Phipps

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



MARK TRAIL
MANATEES ARE CALLED SEA COWS BECAUSE THEY LIVE BY GRAZING ON THE LEAVES AND ROOTS OF WATER PLANTS
EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE PROTECTED BY LAW, THE LARGE AMOUNT OF BOAT TRAFFIC ALONG THE COASTAL INLETS HAS BEEN A BIG THREAT TO THEIR SURVIVAL
WOULD YOU BELIEVE A MANATEE, WHICH IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WARM WATERS OF FLORIDA, WAS RECENTLY SPOTTED IN THE HUDSON RIVER?
MANATEES ARE AN ENDANGERED MARINE MAMMAL... IN THE MOST RECENT SURVEY, WILDLIFE EXPERTS COUNTED ONLY 3,116
THE BIG, SLOW-MOVING, GENTLE GIANTS CAN WEIGH AS MUCH AS 1,500 POUNDS AND MEASURE 10-12 FEET LONG
AND THEY HAVE BEEN REPORTED ALONG THE SHORES OF LONG ISLAND AND RHODE ISLAND
WHEN NOT FEEDING, THE BIG CREATURES WILL REST ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER, AND THIS PUTS THEM IN DANGER FROM PASSING BOATS
WHAT'S CAUSING THEIR MOVEMENT NORTH IS UNKNOWN, BUT HOPEFULLY THEY CAN SURVIVE THE COLD WATERS
JACK ELROD


Henry
BY DON TRACHTE
RING-G-G
NEVER KNEW IT TO FAIL!
JUST GET IN THE TUB IF YOU WANT THE PHONE TO RING!
HENRIETTA SAYS SHE'S GONNA GIVE YOU A CALL IF YOU'RE HOME TODAY, HENRY
RING
DON TRACHTE

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	**$25**
• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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CENTURY
SECOND
HOUR

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Passport No: P.5129013
Type of Passport: China
Date of Birth: May 30, 1981

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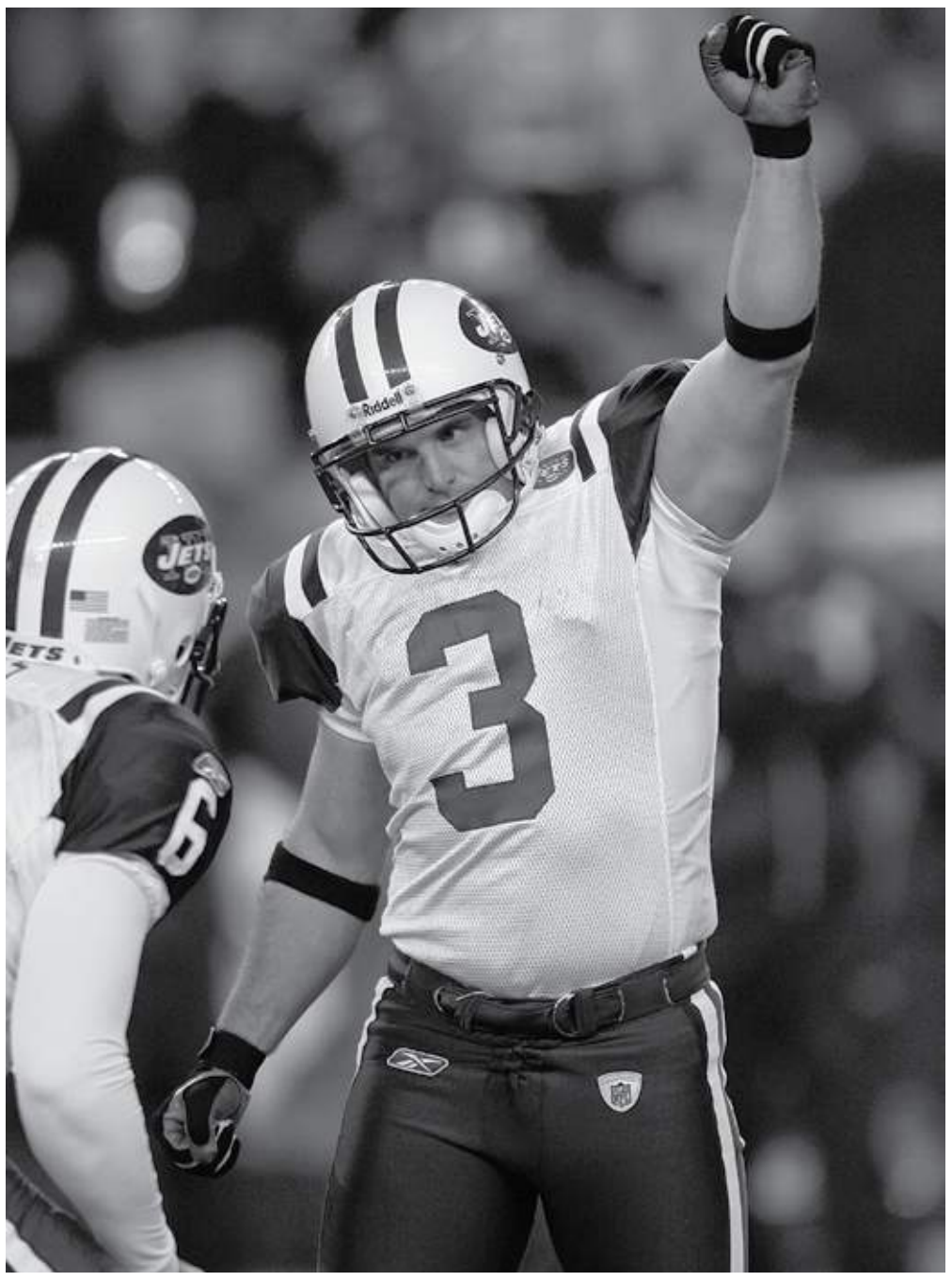
Feely's field goal in OT gives Jets win over Pats



AP

New York Jets' Jay Feely (3) raises his fist after kicking a field goal in overtime of an NFL game against the New England Patriots in Foxborough, Mass., Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008.

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—The New York Jets stand alone atop the tight AFC East standings—barely.

Jay Feely kicked a 34-yard field goal on the first series of overtime after New England tied the game on Matt Cassel's pass to Randy Moss with one second left in regulation and the Jets survived a Tom Brady-like comeback with a 34-31 victory Thursday night.

The win broke a tie for the division lead between the teams and gave the Jets (7-3) sole possession of first place for the first time since Nov. 19, 2001, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. The Patriots (6-4) have won the AFC East the last five seasons and six of the last seven.

"It's a great, great feeling for us," Jets coach Eric Mangini said. "Everybody understands that this game was extremely important, and it's important because it allows us to make the next game (against Tennessee) extremely important. It's a really positive step for our team."

The Jets, who led 24-6 in the first half, extended their winning streak to four with their sixth victory in seven games and are 1 1/2 games ahead of Buffalo and Miami in the division.

The loss wasted a brilliant performance by Cassel, whose first pro start after Brady's season-ending knee injury in the opener came in a 19-10 win over the Jets. Cassel completed 30 of 51 passes for 400 yards, all career highs, and three touchdowns. He ran eight times for 62 yards.

"It's not enough," Cassel said.

The Patriots got the tying touchdown on Cassel's 16-yard pass on fourth down. Moss' diving sideline catch was reviewed when he was pushed out of bounds by cornerback Ty Law, but the touchdown stood.

New England had marched to Moss' touchdown from its 38-yard line with no timeouts and 1:04 left

Stephen Gostkowski's extra point tied it and erased a 31-24 lead the Jets had taken on Thomas Jones' 1-yard touchdown run with 3:10 left.

Brett Favre made his 263rd consecutive regular-season start, an NFL record, and went 26-of-33 for 258 yards and directed the only drive of overtime, covering 64 yards on 14 plays in 7:50. His 16-yard pass to Laveranues Coles brought the ball to the Patriots' 24-yard line, Jones' 6-yard run moved it to the 18 and Feely connected for his second field goal of the game.

"We talked during the week about the need to reload and finish the game," Mangini said, "and we did that."

The Jets scored on their first three series, plus a 92-yard kickoff return by Leon Washington, four days after scoring on all seven of their first-half possessions in a 47-3 rout of the St. Louis Rams.

Washington also scored on a 7-yard pass play before the Patriots cut the lead to 7-3 on their first series on the first of Gostkowski's three field goals, a 42-yarder.

Feely kicked a 22-yarder for the Jets before Gostkowski connected again, from 31 yards to cap a 12-play drive.

New York needed just one play—Washington's return—to score on the ensuing kickoff. It was his first kickoff return for a touchdown this season after he tied a team record last year with three.

And when Favre threw a 15-yard scoring pass to Jerricho Cotchery, the Jets led 24-6 with 4:57 left in the first half and the outlook was very bleak for the Patriots.

"We dug ourselves a hole," New England coach Bill Belichick said. "We made some plays to get back in there."

Cassel threw a 19-yard scoring pass to Jabar Gaffney with 15 seconds left in the half and a 10-yarder to Benjamin Watson on the final play from scrimmage of the third quarter. Then New England made it 24-21 on Cassel's 2-point conversion pass to Gaffney.

"Anytime you can come back from a 24-6 deficit, it's a building block," Cassel said. "That was great for the team."

The Patriots tied it on Gostkowski's 47-yard field goal with 10:16 left in the fourth quarter.

No. 4 UCLA advances to 2K Sports Classic semifinal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Darren Collison made two free throws with 21 seconds remaining and No. 4 UCLA survived a defensive struggle to beat Miami (Ohio) 64-59 on Thursday night in the 2K Sports Classic.

The Bruins (2-0) advanced to next week's semifinals against Michigan at New York's Madison Square Garden. No. 8 Duke meets Southern Illinois in the other game.

Seniors Collison and Josh Shipp both scored 16 points to help UCLA earn its 30th consecutive home victory over a nonconference opponent. The veterans of three consecutive Final Fours generated the offense a night after UCLA's five highly touted freshmen played impressive minutes in their college debuts.

Michael Bramos scored 22 points for the RedHawks (1-1).

Leading 42-40, Miami's Adam Fletcher intentionally fouled James Keefe, who missed both free throws. But freshman Drew Gordon picked up his veteran teammate with a basket that evened the score, one of four ties in the second half.

Miami took another two-point lead before the Bruins ran off seven straight points, helped by Michael Roll's 3-pointer, to go up 49-44 - their largest lead of the half.

But the RedHawks didn't go away. Bramos continued hitting and Antonio Ballard's 3-pointer—his first basket of the game—drew them within one point with five minutes remaining.

Keefe then matched Ballard, hitting a 3-pointer for his first basket to keep UCLA ahead 58-54 in between airballs by Roll and Shipp.

Kenny Hayes' layup gave him his first points and got the RedHawks within two.

Alfred Aboya made two free throws that pushed UCLA's lead to 60-56. Shipp tipped the ball away from Bramos, then threw it off him as Shipp was falling out of bounds, but the referee ruled Miami retained possession.

Hayes' 3-point attempt bounced off the rim, but Shipp fouled Bramos in the ensuing scramble for the rebound. Bramos missed his first free throw and Aboya grabbed the defensive rebound with 1 1/2 minutes left.

Pollitz hit a 3-pointer that drew the RedHawks to 60-59 with 51 seconds left. Clinging to a one-point lead, Collison got fouled at UCLA's end and made both.

Hayes missed a 3-pointer with 10 seconds left and Shipp made two free throws for the final margin.

The Bruins were 13-of-20 from the line, while Miami went 12-of-14.

The RedHawks took a five-point lead to start the game and then never trailed by more than that the rest of the half. They made all seven of their free throws, tied the Bruins with 10 defensive rebounds and nearly matched UCLA's 48 percent shooting.

UCLA forward Nikola Dragovic played his first game of the season after his arrest last week for suspicion of misdemeanor battery. He allegedly pushed his former girlfriend to the ground during an argument and has a scheduled court appearance on Dec. 4. He didn't dress as punishment in Wednesday's 24-point win over Prairie View.

NFL BRIEFS

Redskins RB Portis' knee shows no improvement

ASHBURN, Va. (AP)—Clinton Portis' sprained knee showed no improvement Thursday, and the Washington Redskins running back appears unlikely to play in Sunday night's game against the Dallas Cowboys. The NFL's second-leading rusher left Redskins Park during practice, wearing a gray hooded sweat shirt and burgundy sweat pants as he stepped into his Maserati. "I was hoping today that there would be a little more optimism, and there's not," coach Jim Zorn said. "He's still questionable. I would say there's no change today. I was looking for another jump, but there wasn't." Portis sprained his left knee in the 23-6 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers before last week's bye.

Jones says Cowboys will make playoffs, backs coach

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Jerry Jones "absolutely" believes the Dallas Cowboys will make the playoffs, would welcome Adam "Pacman" Jones back to the team if he's reinstated and isn't considering a coaching change. The Cowboys owner, in an impromptu gathering with reporters during practice Thursday, said he expects his struggling Cowboys to recover. They have gone from Super Bowl favorites to a 5-4 team tied for third place in the NFC East after losing four of their past six games. "That's not optimism," Jones said. "I just see that we were going to have to be a team that (was) playing well and won a lot of games at the end of the year to be what we want to be anyway." Cornerback Adam Jones was suspended indefinitely last month for violating the league's personal conduct policy. Commissioner Roger Goodell said he would determine the length of the suspension after four games, which would be after Sunday's game in Washington. Speculation about coach Wade Phillips' job status has intensified in the past month.

Raiders WR Walker done for year after ankle injury

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Raiders wide receiver Javon Walker is scheduled to undergo ankle surgery and will likely miss the remainder of the season. No official announcement was made and interim coach Tom Cable did not mention it during his daily meeting with the media, but Walker told reporters Thursday that his season is over after injuring his left ankle during Oakland's 17-6 loss to Carolina last Sunday. Walker was not at practice but walked into the Raiders locker room using a pair of crutches and wearing a high protective boot on his left foot. "I'm done for the season," Walker said. "They've got to put some screws in." Walker injured himself while making a 14-yard reception in the second quarter against the Panthers. He limped off the field but later returned to make another catch in the second half. Although Walker finished the game, he was unable to practice Wednesday and was taken for tests Thursday. Cable, who is trying to find a way to end Oakland's three-game losing streak, had not spoken with Walker and was unaware of the receiver's status, a team spokesman said.

Attorneys: QB Michael Vick expects return to NFL

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Imprisoned NFL quarterback Michael Vick expects to return to pro football, according to his bankruptcy attorneys who laid out a plan to pay creditors based in part on his anticipated earnings. "The Debtor has every reason to believe that upon his release, he will be reinstated into the NFL, resume his career and be able to earn a substantial living," Vick's attorneys wrote in a disclosure statement filed before a hearing Thursday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Norfolk. The former Atlanta Falcons star is serving a 23-month sentence in a federal penitentiary for bankrolling a dogfighting ring in rural Virginia and is scheduled to be released on July 20. Once the NFL's highest-paid player, Vick has assets of $16 million and liabilities of $20.4 million, according to the court filing in which attorneys wrote in extraordinary detail about Vick's dizzying financial mess—listing a fleet of vehicles, properties, businesses and the extended family he supported.

James, Cavaliers beat Nuggets, 110-99

CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James just missed his first triple-double this season, but got something even more rare: A win over good buddy Carmelo Anthony.

James scored 22 points, most of them coming with Anthony guarding him, but Cleveland's megastar was on the bench when Mo Williams and the Cavaliers finally put away the Denver Nuggets and won their sixth straight, 110-99 on Thursday night.

Williams scored a season-high 24 points and hit a crucial 3-pointer in the fourth quarter, a shot that put the Cavs ahead by 12 and sent James racing onto the floor in celebration.

James had lost his last five games against Anthony, whom he has known since high school, and is now just 3-8 against his U.S. Olympic teammate since they broke into the league together in 2003. James added 11 assists and eight rebounds as the Cavs beat the Nuggets for the first time since Dec. 15, 2005.

Daniel Gibson snapped out of a shooting slump and added 15 points as the Cavaliers, who held the Nuggets to 18 points in the fourth and 38 in the second half after giving up 61 in the first half.

The Nuggets lost for the first time in four games since acquiring Chauncey Billups in the blockbuster trade that sent Allen Iverson to Detroit.

Billups scored a season-high 26 points—18 in the first half—Anthony had 18 and Kenyon Martin 12 with 10 rebounds for Denver. Martin, who had missed the previous two games with a sprained wrist, was ejected with 55 seconds left after he was called for a flagrant-2 foul for slamming his shoulder into Cleveland forward Anderson Varejao.

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) jumps to the basket as Denver Nuggets' Kenyon Martin (4) watches in the first quarter in an NBA basketball game, Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008, in Cleveland.

Before leaving the floor, Martin screamed obscenities at referee Joey Crawford before he was grabbed by Nuggets coach George Karl and escorted off.

With the Cavaliers leading 94-85, James was replaced with 8:23 remaining. Denver hit a pair of 3-pointers to pull within 98-91, but Williams hit a jumper and then dropped a 3-pointer with 5:53 to give Cleveland a 103-91 lead. As Williams' ball was in the air, James walked onto the floor extending three fingers on both hands and then punched the air when the shot splashed through.

James' flurry in the final 1:35 of the third quarter gave the Cavaliers an 88-81 lead entering the fourth.

First, he drove the lane and dropped an off-balance layup while being fouled by Anthony. He completed a three-point play to make it 83-81, and after JR Smith hit a 3-pointer for Denver, James set up Gibson on the wing and the Cavs guard, who missed all six 3s on Tuesday against Milwaukee, finally knocked down a long-range shot.

Cavs coach Mike Brown was confident Gibson would find his touch eventually. Before the game, Brown was asked what he might tell his guard.

"Shoot, Boobie, shoot," Brown said in a high-pitched voice.

James then closed the period by pulling up and hitting a 19-footer in the final second.

James said Anthony, who was drafted two spots behind James in 2003, never missed a chance to remind him of his domination in their matchups.

"He finds a way to mention that every now and then," James said.

Cleveland shot 61 percent, Denver 60 as neither team played little defense.

There was no need for a 24-second shot clock in the first quarter as the teams combined for 69 points while playing at a dizzying pace reminiscent of the old ABA in the 1970s, when defense was nothing more than a rumor.

Billups scored 16 points on 6-of-7 shooting in the first quarter, and the Nuggets went 5-for-5 on 3-pointers and shot 74 percent (14-of-19) from the floor.

Pistons 107, Warriors 102

In Oakland, California, Allen Iverson scored 23 points and Rasheed Wallace hit back-to-back 3-pointers in the fourth quarter as Detroit struggled past Golden State.

After losing their first two games with Iverson, the Pistons have won the first two games on their four-game road trip. There wasn't a lot to feel good about, though, in this blunder-filled game that featured 33 turnovers and many other miscues.

The Warriors are still seeking their first back-to-back wins of the season.

Bulls 98, Mavericks 91

In Chicago, the home team roared back from an early 19-point deficit to send Dallas to its fourth straight loss.

Ben Gordon scored 35 points for the Bulls, who were booed early in the game by their home crowd.

Indians lefty Cliff Lee wins AL Cy Young Award

NEW YORK (AP)—Cliff Lee went from the minor leagues to the pinnacle of pitching in one fantastic year. Now, he's eager to repeat his award-winning performance. Lee took the American League Cy Young Award in a runaway Thursday, capping a dominant comeback season that made him the second consecutive Cleveland Indians lefty to earn the coveted prize.

"It feels a lot better than it felt in '07," Lee said on a conference call from his Arkansas home. "I want to win this Cy Young again. I want to make a habit of it."

Demoted to the minors last year, Lee went a major league-best 22-3 this season with a 2.54 ERA. He received 24 of 28 first-place votes and 132 points in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Toronto ace Roy Halladay was a distant runner-up with four first-place votes and 71 points. Record-setting closer Francisco Rodriguez of the Los Angeles Angels finished third with 32 points.

Lee became the third Cleveland pitcher to win a Cy Young, following Hall of Famer Gaylord Perry in 1972 and CC Sabathia last year.

"We are pretty close friends, and there's a lot of things I picked up from him and I'd like to think there's a few things he picked up from me," Lee said. "I've tried to help him out in situations and he's tried to do the same for me. Apparently it's worked. We've turned into pretty good pitchers."

Trudging through a disappointing season and cognizant of budget constraints, the injury-depleted Indians traded Sabathia to Milwaukee on July 7. He is expected to fetch a huge contract this offseason after filing for free agency.

"I definitely miss him being around on the team. He's someone that I leaned on," Lee said. "I saw how he did it in '07 and I watched everything he did. I knew what it took because I'd seen it. It definitely was a benefit to watch it right in front of me."

An 18-game winner in 2005, Lee was hurt in spring training last year and struggled so badly he was sent to the minors. He returned to the big leagues and finished 5-8 with a 6.29 ERA, then was left off Cleveland's postseason roster.

"I was kind of pushed to the side," Lee said. "That was tough."

The Indians asked him to visit pitching coach Carl Willis in North Carolina last offseason, and Lee said their chat helped. Determined to re-establish himself, he won a spot in the rotation during spring training and was the league's top pitcher from April on.

Lee had an amazing 0.67 ERA through his first seven outings and was 12-2 with a 2.31 ERA when he started for the AL in the July 15 All-Star game at Yankee Stadium.

"I knew pretty early that it was going to be a special year. I really did," Lee said. "But I also knew that I had to keep my mind in the moment, keep doing my work, not cut any corners."

Pitching for an inconsistent team that rallied late to finish 81-81, Lee was a mark of consistency. Confident in his off-speed stuff as well as his pinpoint fastball, he walked only 34 batters in 31 starts and suddenly went from No. 5 starter to ace.

"I made a conscious effort to work on throwing away from righties and using my curveball more, using my changeup more and actually pitching," Lee said. "I was going to miss spots here and there, but for the most part I felt like I had command from the first start to the last start and I made guys earn their way on."

The 30-year-old Lee led the AL in ERA and ranked second in innings (223 1-3) and complete games (four). Halladay, the 2003 winner, topped those two categories with 246 innings and nine complete games. The right-hander also was 20-11 with a 2.78 ERA, second in the league. He piled up 206 strikeouts to Lee's 170.

Still, Lee was a heavy favorite to win Thursday. The only question seemed to be whether the vote would be unanimous.

"Obviously, I used '07 as motivation in the offseason to go and do everything I could to make sure that didn't happen again," he said. "I also think that going through what I did last year did help in making me a mentally tougher baseball player. Looking back on it, it wasn't any fun. But it definitely makes for a better story."

Lee became the first Cleveland pitcher to win 20 games since Perry in 1974, and his surprising comeback was crucial for a team that was hurt by injuries to starters Fausto Carmona and Jake Westbrook.

"My job is to come back in '09 and do it again. There's no reason to think I can't," Lee said. "I honestly feel like I'm going to come back and pick up right where I left off."

Lee received a $250,000 bonus for winning, and the price of Cleveland's 2010 club option increased from $8 million to $9 million. Halladay got $200,000 for finishing second.

Rodriguez, who set a major league mark with 62 saves this season, was listed second on seven ballots and third on 11.

MLB BRIEFS

Johnson becomes free agent, talks with D-Backs end

PHOENIX (AP)—Randy Johnson filed for free agency on Thursday after failing to reach a contract agreement to return to the Arizona Diamondbacks. The 45-year-old lefty is five wins shy of 300 and "hopes to find a team where he can continue to pitch at a high level and contribute to another world championship," agents Barry Meister and Alan Nero said in a statement. The agents said they met in Phoenix on Monday with Diamondbacks chief executive officer Jeff Moorad and general manager Josh Byrnes "to explore every option for Randy to remain a Diamondback in 2009 and for the remainder of his career." "The Diamondbacks have a budget based on their club's financial situation and obviously viewed Randy's contract in that context," the agents said. "Randy considered every reasonable compromise, including offering to take a 50 percent pay cut, all to remain a Diamondback. However, the economic situation did not lend itself to an agreement."

Marlins trade reliever Kevin Gregg to Cubs

CHICAGO (AP)—The Chicago Cubs acquired reliever Kevin Gregg in a trade with the Florida Marlins on Thursday, a move that appears to end Kerry Wood's career with the team. Wood, the 1998 NL Rookie of the Year who saved 34 games this year, had been the longest-tenured player on the Cubs. General manager Jim Hendry said Wood was deserving of a three- or four-year deal and the Cubs are not prepared to offer him one. In addition to the right-handed Gregg, who was the Marlins' closer until the final month last season, Chicago also has a talented setup man in Carlos Marmol, who could close. "We're just in a situation—and Kerry fully understands—that length of deal for the kind of salary that he could command right now is not our first priority," Hendry said during a conference call. He said the Cubs need to finish their rotation—they hope to bring back free agent starter Ryan Dempster—and add offense.

Nick Swisher acquired by Yankees from White Sox

NEW YORK (AP)—Nick Swisher became the first part of the New York Yankees' offseason makeover when he was acquired from the Chicago White Sox on Thursday in a five-player trade. Choosing to address first base before concentrating on pitching when the free-agent market opens Friday, the Yankees obtained Swisher and right-hander Kaneoka Texeira for pitching prospect Jeff Marquez, infielder Wilson Betemit and minor league pitcher Jhonny Nunez. A switch-hitter who turns 28 on Nov. 25, Swisher was acquired by the White Sox from Oakland last January and hit .219 with 24 homers and 69 RBIs. He struck out 135 times and his .332 on-base percentage was the lowest of his career. "He had his worst major league season," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "We did our due diligence and engaged our scouts and do believe and certainly are hoping that '07 and '06 are more representative of Nick Swisher than '08. It's certainly a risk that were willing to take on."

Guiao bares RP Team lineup for 2009 FIBA-ASIA wars

Team to chart own destiny, will play in SEABA tilt in May

MANILA, Philippines—Coach Yeng Guiao Thursday made public his official list of players who will comprise the Philippine Team that will try to defend the SEABA championship and gain passage into the FIBA-Asia qualifying tournament for the World Championships.

Named to the team were Ranidel de Ocampo and Arwind Santos of Air21, Willie Miller and Sonny Thoss of Alaska, Barangay Ginebra's Jayjay Helterbrand, Asi Taulava of Coca-Cola, Purefoods 1-2 punch of Kerby Raymundo and James Yap, this season's No. 1 overall pick Gabe Norwood of Rain or Shine, Cyrus Baguio of Red Bull, San Miguel's Mick Pennisi, Kelly Williams and Ryan Reyes of Sta. Lucia and Talk n Text rookie Jared Dillinger.

Except for Santos, Miller, Baguio, Reyes and Dillinger, the rest were members or part of the pool of the previous RP Team coached by Chot Reyes.

Guiao said the team he assembled is blessed with speed, scoring ability and athleticism.

The team has an average ceiling of 6-foot-4.

"It is not as big as I would want it to be. Sana meron nga tayong naturalized players na seven-footers who can match-up with the big players of the Middle East and probably Japan and Korea. But Mick and Asi are here so they can provide us with some size and match up to a certain degree," Guiao said.

"I am very confident of our talent from the point guards to the guards. They are potent players at those positions," he added.

Before going public of his choices, Guiao first revealed his roster to the PBA Board of Governors, who hosted him to a lunch meeting to show their support for the RP Team.

To underscore the seriousness with which people involved in the project are taking the mission, the PBA gave the green light for the all-pro squad to compete in the all-important qualifying competition leading up to the FIBA tournament

"We'll represent the country in the SEABA," Barrios announced in a joint press conference at the league's office in Libis, Quezon City.

With the go-signal, Guiao's team will see action in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association Championship in May 2009, which serves as the qualifying event for the FIBA-Asia tilt.

No venue has yet been set for the SEABA competition, which Chot Reyes' RP team swept last year in Ratchaburi, Thailand en route to clinching a berth in the 2007 FIBA-Asia Olympic qualifier in Tokushima, Japan.

Barrios said they have already informed the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas of the PBA board's decision through vice chairman and PBA Board member Ricky Vargas of Talk 'N Text.

The PBA Board thought it would be best if Guiao and his charges represent the country in that event rather than gamble with a different team.

"The SBP, particularly its president Manny Pangilinan, is very supportive of the PBA," said Barrios.

The SEABA joust will mean adjustment in the PBA calendar, however.

"We still don't know where and when exactly, but it's possible to take a one-week break (during the Fiesta Cup)," Barrios said.

Guiao said he will gather the team over dinner on Monday "to orient (the players), talk about the philosophy of the team, set the objectives and bond together."

Hard work begins on Nov. 24 when the team starts training at the San Juan Arena from 6-9 p.m.

Noticeably out of the team are Jimmy Alapag and Mark Caguioa, both members of the national team that placed ninth in the FIBA-Asia qualifying tournament for a spot in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Guiao said he strongly considered the two but felt Alapag will be a mismatch against big guards while Caguioa's absence in the ongoing KFC PBA Philippine Cup due to injury makes it hard for Guiao to make an assessment of his readiness.

Japhet Aguilar, a 6-10 former Ateneo Blue Eagle now studying at Western Kentucky U, will be arriving in May and is willing to go through a tryout for the team, according to Guiao.

Barrios, who was seated next to Guiao when the RP coach made the announcement, said the team might compete in the Jones Cup and another short tournament in the Middle East as part of its preparations. He said the SBP is also working to host a pocket tournament to provide the team with enough games before it goes to battle. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

ACME

From Page 28

and were replaced by young spikers Brandon Chargualaf and Ken Tanzawa. The two relievers almost pulled it off for Enyophace helping their team tie the game at 16-all, after trailing at 10-16.

But Sheri restored order to Acme Roofing, leaping up for killer spikes to send the game in a deciding third set.

Sheri started the third set with a big kill and the ensuing plays saw Acme Roofing prevailing on the battle on the net.

Acme Roofing was threatening to pull away leading by six, 9-3, when Enyophace sued for time. It was a good move, as Enyophace scored two straight points with Taylor diving for the ball on two occasions, but failing to reach it for the first time and hitting it too hard on the second instance.

Roscow moved Acme Roofing within a point of wrapping up the match when his kill dropped at the back line with no Enyophace player manning the spot.

Taylor, who had troubles going for skills and blocking Enyophace spikers in the first set with sand making its way to his eyes, had the last say in the game when he hit a powerful kill from the right side, a few inches away from the net. Enyophace decided not to block Luther and it paid for the gamble when the ball went to the backline and Mel Matson was not able to receive it.

Sheri, Roscow, and Taylor played without relief and was joined by teammates Elizabeth Henke, Jeanni Brown, and Dana McFadden in receiving their cash prize of $100. J.R. Ngeskebei and Rob Jordan were the other members of the team, but failed to play in the finals.

PILCOWA

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Care's Ronald Delos Reyes, Junar Guiab, and Elmer Esdrelon.

Four players are representing Olivos/Reliance Construction on the Light All-Stars. The list include Glen Mercurio, Edmark Mendoza, Ivan De Vero, and Bernard Montano.

San Miguel Light with have its top two gunners—Ryan Sanciangco and Leo Itaas—playing for the Light All-Stars. Alex Lauron is the third Beermen to make it to the selection.

The Light All-Stars will be coached by Century's John Penalosa and Diamond's Boy Garcia.

Game time is at 7:30pm after a three-point shootout at 6:30pm. The seven teams will have one player each competing in the shootout.

Playoffs will start next week with Century Insurance getting a bye in the first round after taking the pennant.

Century and MIGS had identical 5-1 records in the regular season, but the former won the tiebreak due to the win-over-the-other rule.

MIGS along with C&R/NRG, Aon, Diamond, Olivos, and San Miguel will fight for the last three semifinals ticket.

The playoff round will have a single-elimination format.

DCCA

From Page 28

Ngirbedul (3-for-5).

Rounding of the Top 10 were Connie Camacho, Kuki Pangelinan, Abby Atalig, Juanette Atalig, Lenice Kapileo, Antonette Laniyo, Charlene Cabrera, Lilian Aguon, Pauline Tudela and Julie Guerrero.

Bert Camacho has the most runs scored so far with nine, while three players made one doubles apiece, while five scored one triple each.

Pauline Tudela of Finance was the lone player to record a homer after two weeks of competition, while Laniyo had six RBIs, the most by any player so far.

In the pitching race, Bego Camacho is on top with her 2.69 ERA. Camacho pitched in two games and 13 innings, allowed 26 hits, and gave up 18 runs.

NMC's Felisa Brel is in second place with 3.00 ERA, followed by DCCA's Eula Matsumoto (4.79), CHC's Meng Yamada (10.50), and CUC's Dolorina Panuelo (12.83).

Matsumoto is leading the league in strikeouts with 10.

In the men's division, which have 20 teams competing for the title, CPA's Manuel Degracia is leading the league in the batting race.

After two games with CPA, Degracia is still perfect, going 5-for-5. P & S's Bernard Kilelеman and CUC's Vinnie Sablan both went 5-for-6 for identical batting average of .833.

Completing the Top 10 were the Joeten Motors' Ben Taisacan (.800), DCCA's Jun Saralu (.800), SaipanCell/DFS's Kuich Damian (.800), Freedom Air's Roy Celis (.800), Law & Order's Derek Sasamoto (.750), Beach Boys' s B.J. Sablan (.714), Legislature's Dennis Ngeskebei (.714), Beach Boys' J.R. Suel (714), CPA's Jack Diaz (.714), PSS's John Terlaje (.714), SaipanCell/DFS's Payton Sakuma (.714), and Law & Order's Sylvio Ada (.714).

Mark Toves has the most runs scored so far with five, Tony Celis has the most doubles with three, Ben Taisacan and Harlan Reyes has the most triples with two, and Byron Kaipat has the most homers with three. Kaipat also has the most RBIs with eight.

In the pitching race, Freedom Air's Albert Lizama is trailing nine other pitchers with his 0.00 ERA. Lizama pitched only in one game and in seven innings, allowing only four hits and giving up no runs. He had an error-free pitching game for Freedom Air.

Pitching leaders were based on seven or more innings pitched.

Fernando Camacho and J.J. Salas have the most strikeouts so far with five each.

PISTONS

From Page 28

even to practice ("I've tried it my way plenty of times and it hasn't been done.")

"I'm not taking anything away from AI, he's a great player," said Kevin Garnett after the Celtics beat the Pistons, 88-76, in Auburn Hills, "but when a team's cohesive, man, and they are joined as one, it's different. It's very different."

Said Boston Coach Doc Rivers, speaking for the entire East: "I was just hoping that they would trade all five of their starters."

This wasn't just a trade for the Pistons, but the end of a way of life.

From 2004 when Rasheed Wallace arrived to 2006 when Ben Wallace left, they started the same five players. If they weren't great, they were special, but the pinball machine that is today's world doesn't pay off on sustained excellence.

The Piston have made the last six Eastern Conference finals but they won one only one title, in 2004 when they rocked the Lakers' world.

The one time they seemed on the verge of greatness, starting 37-5 in the 2005-6 season, they finished 64-18 and were upended by Miami in the East finals.

In the three seasons from Rasheed's arrival to Ben's departure, they had one 20-point scorer, Rip Hamilton, who hit 20.1 once.

They ran on the respect they didn't get, challenging every official's call from opening tip to final buzzer, bonded on the floor and off.

They had a term for it: "the championship bond." When four of them became All-Stars in 2006, they wrote the name of Tayshaun Prince, the only starter not to make it, on their sneakers in protest.

When Ben Wallace left as a free agent, teammates text messaged him daily. When Billups went in last week's trade, some of his teammates were devastated.

"Me and Chaunce, we came in as nothing when we first got to Detroit and then we pretty much played ourselves into stars here and won a championship together," Hamilton told the Piston press corps.

"It's so tough. You always think you're going to play together forever but in life, nothing is ever forever. I miss him like I would miss a brother."

The Pistons now do as much grief counseling as coaching. Dumars told Hamilton that when Isiah Thomas retired, Dumars felt so lost, he came home after the first practice and called Isiah.

"I told him, `Man, I had the weirdest feeling today,' " Dumars said.

"Isiah was like, `What happened?'

"I told him, `I stepped out on that court today and you weren't there.' "

With Iverson, Hamilton, Prince, Rasheed Wallace and their young players (Rodney Stuckey, Jason Maxiell, Arron Afflalo and Amir Johnson), it remains to be seen what these Pistons are.

Whatever it will be, it won't be the Pistons everyone knew all these years, starting with the Pistons.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	8	1	.889	_
New York	5	3	.625	2 1/2
Toronto	4	4	.500	3 1/2
Philadelphia	3	5	.375	4 1/2
New Jersey	2	5	.286	5

Southeast Division

Atlanta	6	1	.857	_
Orlando	5	3	.625	1 1/2
Miami	4	4	.500	2 1/2
Charlotte	2	5	.286	4
Washington	1	5	.167	4 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	7	2	.778	_
Detroit	6	2	.750	1/2
Indiana	4	3	.571	2
Chicago	4	5	.444	3
Milwaukee	4	5	.444	3

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	5	3	.625	_
New Orleans	4	3	.571	1/2
Memphis	3	6	.333	2 1/2
San Antonio	2	5	.286	2 1/2
Dallas	2	6	.250	3

Northwest Division

Utah	6	2	.750	_
Portland	5	3	.625	1
Denver	4	4	.500	2
Minnesota	1	6	.143	4 1/2
Oklahoma City	1	7	.125	5

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	7	0	1.000	_
Phoenix	6	3	.667	2
Sacramento	4	5	.444	4
Golden State	3	6	.333	5
L.A. Clippers	1	7	.125	6 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Cleveland 110, Denver 99
Chicago 98, Dallas 91
Detroit 107, Golden State 102

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

James, Cavaliers beat Nuggets 110-99

LeBron James just missed his first triple-double this season, but got something even more rare: A win over good buddy Carmelo Anthony.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Feely's field goal in OT gives Jets win over Pats

The New York Jets stand alone atop the tight AFC East standings—barely. Jay Feely kicked a 34-yard field goal on the first series of overtime after New England tied the game on Matt Cassel's pass to Randy Moss with one second left.

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Acme Roofing wins beach volleyball fall league

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Acme Roofing's Larry Sheri, left, goes up for one of his several kills against Dan Westphal and the rest of Enyophace's blockers during their title game in the 2008 Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League Thursday night on the PIC sand court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Members of Acme Roofing pose for a group photo after winning over Enyophace during their title game in the 2008 Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League Thursday night on the PIC sand court.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Acme Roofing lived up to its name ending the 2008 Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volleyball Fall League on top of the field after beating Enyophace in the title match Thursday night on the PIC sand court.

The first word of the team's name Acme means highest point and true to its name, Acme Roofing reached the peak of the tournament after pulling off a come-from-behind, 15-21, 21-17, 15-10 win in the finals.

The victory was a perfect way to culminate the fall league for Acme Roofing as it also led the regular season with a clean 10-0 record.

Acme Roofing defeated Thai One On in the semifinals to gain the first finals slot. Enyophace downed Karakuchi in the other semis duel to set the stage for the title showdown between the top two teams in the league. Enyophace finished second to Acme Roofing in the regular season with a 9-1 slate.

Enyophace was off to a good start in the championship match with its service game working, Apple Samson making tricky ball placements, and Dan Westphal and Bruce Berline holding their ground on the net against Acme Roofing's Larry Sheri and Jazz Roscow.

But things began to go Acme Roofing's way with Larry Sheri starting to hit those powerful kills and Luther Taylor spending most of the night diving for the ball.

In the second set, Westphal and Berline were out of the court

See ACME on Page 27

PILCOWA caging holds All-Star Game tonight

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Inaugural 2008 PILCOWA-San Miguel Beer Basketball League will be holding an All-Star Game tonight at the CIC Centre Basketball Court in Garapan before starting the playoffs.

The All-Star Game will feature selected players who were divided into two teams—the Dark and Light All-Stars.

Each team is composed of 13 players.

The Dark Team will have MIGS's Banjo Basila, Sonny Lerio, Kae Bernardo, and Bonbon Cadagat on its roster.

C&R Distributor/NRG will have the most players on the Dark All-Stars with Jun Estolas, Jericho Cruz, Badong Camacho, James Villacrusis, Melvin Villarin, and Mel Capalad joining the team.

Completing the Dark All-Stars are Aon Insurance's Leo Factor, Jolan Mendoza, and James Abuy. C&R coach Marvin Deocares will call the shots for the Dark All-Stars.

The Light All-Stars will be bannered by three stalwarts of pennant champion Century Insurance, namely Wowie Abuel, Jawn Joyner, and Larry Palero.

The trio will team up with Diamond Auto

See PILCOWA on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Wowie Abuel, right, of Century Insurance is seen here dribbling against Sonny Ranola of Diamond Auto Care during their game in the Inaugural 2008 PILCOWA-San Miguel Beer Basketball League at the CIC Centre Basketball Court. Abuel made it to the Light All-Stars.

DCCA players lead women's batting race

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

After weeks of competitions in the Budweiser 2008 Inter-Government/Business Softball League, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs are leading the women's division batting race.

Bert Camacho and Doris Rangamar are in the Top 2 spots in the batting competition with averages of .819 and .778, respectively. DCCA has a 2-1 record.

Camacho went 9-for-11 in three games with DCCA, while Rangamar hit 7-for-9.

Completing the Top 5 were Finance's Bego Camacho (6-for-8), DCCA's Erica Tenorio (5-for-9), and NMC's Angie

See DCCA on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Dolores Rangamar of DCCA is seen getting ready to bat in one of the softball tournaments this year. Rangamar is leading the women's batting race in the Budweiser 2008 Inter-Government/Business Softball League, along with teammate Bert Camacho.

By MARK HEISLER
(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

Pistons have their chemistry altered with arrival of Iverson

By MARK HEISLER
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

They're not Bad Boys anymore.

They're not even the Sons of the Bad Boys. Whatever the Detroit Pistons are or will be, it's nothing like the '80s with Bill Laimbeer and Rick Mahorn, whom Celtics announcer Johnny Most called "McFilthy and McNasty," or their more gentlemanly but no less attitudinal incarnation in recent seasons.

It's a brave, new Pistons world. If they're Allen Iverson's team—he was their leading scorer in his first three games, two of which they lost—no one is sure what that means.

"We feel like this deal gives us the best of both worlds," Detroit President Joe Dumars said in an e-mail of his trade sending Chauncey Billups to Denver for Iverson.

"We continue to compete at the highest level and we put ourselves in a great position going forward."

In 2010 the Pistons will be younger and more athletic with enough cap space to be players for the LeBron James-Dwyane Wade-Chris Bosh free-agent class.

At the moment, however, at 5-2 (going into Thursday night's game at Golden State) they're still finding out at what level they can compete.

Iverson's attitude is exemplary, having announced he would make any sacrifice,

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